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The Week

THE intimation given by M. Dariac of the course which the Poincaré government intends to pursue regarding the Mellon-Berenger agreement is most promising. He speaks neither of ratification, which would be a dishonest and eventually a trouble-making expedient, nor of flat rejection, which would be justified only on sentimental grounds and would be sure to stiffen American resistance to any modification. His proposal is of acceptance with reservations. The reservations would presumably take the form of guarantee clauses with two ends in view —one that the debt could not be transformed from a government to a private obligation, and thus become an instrument for effectuating the much feared American financial grip on France; the other that payments would not be made if they endangered the exchange value of the franc. The first would give an assurance against a danger which American defenders of the pact say is illusory; the second would grant France the same sensible concession which the Dawes plan grants Germany in the interest of recipients as well as of debtor. It would be difficult to oppose either safeguard, and if they are accepted, payments which would cripple France would probably be avoided, for if she did not develop a sufficient export surplus she could not pay without selling securities abroad or depressing the exchange.

AMONG the consequences to Great Britain of failure to settle the coal strike are the loss of several hundred thousand tons of steel production to Germany, the shut-down of the cotton mills two weeks out of three, a general trade depression even more severe than before the strike, a decrease of over £20,000,000 in railway receipts and of nearly £700,000,000 in bank clearings, a treasury deficit nearly doubled. National savings certificates presented for repayment last month exceeded sales of new certificates by a million and a half. This creeping paralysis is certainly no better than the sharp and sudden shock of the general strike. In view of what is happening, how can it possibly be said that workers in other industries had no legitimate interest in seeing the miners' grievances settled promptly, and no right to adopt drastic measures to force a settlement? Would it not have been better from every point of view if the general strike had brought a prompt liquidation of the scandalous coal disorganization and everyone had returned to work? A nation can stand a holiday of a week or two; it cannot stand gradual immobilization.

DESPITE the efforts of the Republicans to keep prohibition from becoming a campaign issue it is now an important factor in the fight in the two crucial states of Illinois and New York. In the former, Hugh Magill, the independent Republican candidate for Senator, is an outspoken dry. He is Secretary of the National Council of Religious Education and was once Superintendent of Schools of Springfield. Though he is making his main campaign on the issue of public utility money poured out in support of his Republican opponent, Frank L. Smith, he will also get support on the prohibition issue from some dry Democrats who cannot stomach Boss Brennan, and from many dry Republicans. (Incidentally, the Anti-Saloon League by some queer process of reasoning is supporting Smith, and has been excoriated, roundly and justly,

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by the editor of the Christian Century for doing so.) It is not impossible that Magill will split the Republicans sufficiently to enable Mr. Brennan to win. In the last four Senatorial elections in Illinois the Republican vote has exceeded the Democratic by an average of 389,943 out of an average total of 1,460,631. Mr. Magill needs to get 40 percent of the Republican vote to give the election to the Democrats. In view of the fact that many wet Republicans will vote for Brennan, the likelihood that Mr. Smith would be rejected by the Senate even if successful, and especially the disgraceful expenditure of money in his behalf and by those who are directly affected by his actions as state utilities commissioner, this seems by no means impossible.

IN New York state Senator Wadsworth is in a plight as serious as that of Smith in Illinois. He not only has the opposition of one of Tammany's ablest men, State Supreme Court Justice Robert F. Wagner, but that of F. W. Cristman, who is running as an independent dry Republican candidate. In the last four Senatorial elections the Republican vote in New York has exceeded the Democratic on the average by only 138,330, and Mr. Cristman needs to get only 14 percent of the party vote from Wadsworth to defeat him. The Republican strength in New York, of course, is in the rural regions: in New York City the party has the allegiance of only 38 percent of the voters. Rural New York is predominantly dry; and Cristman can make good use of the charge that Wadsworth, once a prohibitionist, has now grown less than lukewarm in the faith. He could also mention, if he cared to, that the Senator voted to seat Newberry, and opposed the Senatorial investigations of the oil scandal and the Pennsylvania and Illinois primaries. He endorsed the use of the injunction in the famous railway strike of 1922, has been a consistent opponent of income taxes, and would like to see military training made universal. Wagner, on the other hand, while it is true that he is a Tammany man through and through, is the author of the New York state conservation act, was Chairman of the factory investigation committee which brought about the child labor law and other needed industrial welfare legislation, and as a judge has upheld the right of strikers to use peaceful picketing, which is even now under attack in New York City. On the whole, we feel that the exchange of Wagner for Wadsworth in the U. S. Senate would not be a calamity which should call forth salty tears from good citizens.

AN interesting struggle is going on within the ranks of the Farmer-Labor party in Minnesota. The moot question is whether to continue the party as a separate entity or to go back to the former course of working inside one of the old-line parties, a policy which has been followed successfully by like-minded groups in Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota and elsewhere. A few days ago twelve leaders of the Farmer-Labor party signed a round robin urging supporters of the organization to vote the Democratic ticket. They included Oscar Brekke, president of the Farmers' Nonpartisan League, the editor of The Leader, and several local chairmen. In support of this attitude it is pointed out that in this year's primary the Farmer-Labor vote fell from a former record of 204,000 to 155,000, while the Republicans increased their strength from 238,000 to 400,000. The Farmer-Labor party has only four important offices at present—one U. S. Senator and three out of ten Congressmen. Those who oppose abandoning the party as such urge that the Farmer-Labor strength is never fully revealed in the primaries, and remind their faint-hearted brethren that Senator Shipstead was elected in 1922 by 83,000 votes. Former U. S. Senator Magnus Johnson is running for Governor on the Farmer-Labor ticket and making a vigorous campaign which centres around unqualified support of the McNary-Haugen bill. Prohibition will play little part in the state contest, Minnesota being dry politically whatever may be its status in fact. The results in November should give a valuable clue to the present strength of the third party movement in the state which has been its strongest citadel.

THE Republican party is in for serious trouble in Indiana. A committee of the state's newspaper publishers, headed by Thomas H. Adams of the Vincennes Commercial, has been investigating the actions of D. C. Stephenson, late Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan. Stephenson, who is now serving a life sentence in the penitentiary for an assault on, and murder of, Miss Madge Oberholtzer, was for several years boss of the Republican party in Indiana. He had a habit of requiring state officials, of whom a considerable number were members of the K. K. K., to swear a pledge of fealty to himself, of such blood-curdling ferocity that it thereafter far transcended in their minds any mere oath of office. Stephenson has promised to tell all he knows, and the newspaper committee already has accumulated a mass of documents dealing it is said with wholesale bribery and corruption, including the purchase of courts of law and even members of the U. S. Congress. The question now waiting decision is whether the investigation should be by a committee of the Indiana Legislature or the U. S. Senate. That the story will be revealed by one group or the other seems probable, although Mr. Adams reports that desperate efforts are being made to head off the disclosures. Among the persons who don't want the facts to come to light is one J. Frank McDermott of Attica, President of the Publishers' Association, who is quoted as saying that he "doesn't care to have anything to do with this whole thing." That remark ought to make Mr. McDermott famous, if nothing else ever does.

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THE nomination by both parties of Benjamin N. Cardozo for Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals is not the most dramatic but on a long view perhaps the most significant feature of the New York political campaign. Judge Cardozo is one of the half dozen great judges of the English-speaking world. He has a mind of power and aristocratic distinction; a character exquisite and far from the maddening crowd. Yet this aloof and philosophic temperament now becomes the head of New York's judiciary through popular process and in obedience to a widely expressed public opinion which both Democratic and Republican politicians had to heed. It is a healthy sign that the highest judicial position should be withdrawn from irrelevant party contest. But that the choice should have fallen on one who has no claim except unqualified fitness is a weighty rebuke to the current cynicism about democracy as the cult of incompetence. The pervasive part played by the judicial power in our national life can continue only if our highest courts are manned by sensitive minds conscious of the political rôle exercised by our judges. With Judge Cardozo as its chief the New York Court of Appeals has a leader learned and sagacious to whom law is a mode of realizing the good life and not a pedantic system of restraints.

MUCH has been heard recently about adult education, and much more will be heard in the future, both as to the sort of educational material of which adults are in search, and that which is available to them. As a footnote to the former question, it is interesting to note the character of the courses announced for the present year at the New School for Social Research, New York City, the most ambitious experiment in adult education yet attempted in this country. The New School gives no degrees or credits toward degrees; and while 80 percent of its 1200 students have done college work, half of them holding degrees, it has no formal entrance requirements. The curriculum of such a school which is, so to speak, strictly à la carte, and in which the wishes of the students play an important part in the selection of subjects to be offered, should afford a valuable clue to the present preoccupations of adults who are potential students. Psychology is the subject which receives first place, 22 percent of all the courses being in this field. Next in favor come literature, and the drama and art, with a combined total of 14 percent. History, philosophy, education and finance are all held in equal esteem, each accounting for 11 percent of the total. We think those who have had the opportunity to test the public interest in other ways will agree with us that as far as the fairly intelligent lay public is concerned, this proportion accurately represents the fields and extent of their present interest.

THE use of the injunction in labor disputes is once again to the fore, this time in New York City. For thirteen weeks 40,000 workers in the garment trade, members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, have been on strike. This number represents 95 percent of those in the industry, and means a practically complete stoppage. The strikers, as is usual in such a case, have engaged in what they describe as "peaceful picketing" of the shops of their employers. Their leaders insist that "there has hardly been a single instance of lawlessness committed by members on the picket line." Nevertheless an injunction has now been issued by Judge Guy and continued by Justice Ingraham of the Supreme Court, which prohibits all picketing of the employers' shops. The decision of Justice Ingraham is based on the very large number of arrests of strikers which the police have made day after day, often running into hundreds. The strikers are herded into court and then dismissed with a nominal fine or no punishment at all. The police have even gone so far as to halt passers-by in the street, ask "Are you a cloakmaker?" and on receiving an affirmative answer, thrust them into the line-up. One such person, whose negative reply was misunderstood or ignored, was arrested and then turned out to be Congressman Fiorella H. La Guardia—whereupon the police dropped him like a very hot potato.

THE strikers declare that the action of the police has been inspired by an understanding with the employers, and has been for the purpose of creating a false impression that there was ground for a court order prohibiting picketing. Even if you approve of the use of the injunction in labor disputes—and we do not see how any fair-minded person can—such collusion between police and employers would remain dishonest and disgraceful. An appeal is to be taken at once by the union to a higher court. It will probably be impossible to bring to light all the facts, but we hope that enough of them will come out to let the public judge whether the outrageous bargain which is alleged does in fact exist.

IT IS long since the American Federation of Labor has had a new, clear, simple and practicable rallying cry; the eight-hour day has served it faithfully for years but has now been won in most organized trades. The forty-hour week meets the demand of the time; and it is perhaps a fortunate coincidence that the demand should be launched at a convention in Detroit, the same city in which Henry Ford has just anticipated it. The chances are that (except by such die-hards as Mr. J. A. Emery of the National Association of Manufacturers) this new improvement in labor's condition will not be fought with the same horror, and the same silly arguments, that greeted the successive campaigns for the ten-hour and the eight-hour day. A consciousness of the great gains of productivity and of the advantages to the employer of a rested and contented labor force, as well as the necessity of a prosperous

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consuming public with leisure time, is now too widespread—except in certain backward industries such as textiles—to make a respectable opposition possible except on the ground that the industry or plant in question is not ready yet for a chance that some time will come. The principal danger from the union point of view seems to us that the fight may not be stiff enough to engage labor's loyalty and idealism as did the earlier emancipations from grinding toil. Perhaps the time is approaching when other slogans must be found than those which follow in the wake of capitalism's "progress" by demanding merely more pay for fewer hours.

THE process of the law is a slow and often erratic Juggernaut, but "it do move." While former Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty has been on trial in New York City for his alleged complicity in the American Metal Company case (the first trial in our history of a former cabinet officer for actions performed while in office) two court decisions have aided the prosecution in the oil scandal. The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals at St. Louis has reversed the decision of District Court Judge T. Blake Kennedy at Cheyenne, Wyo., in regard to the Sinclair lease at Teapot Dome, orders the lease canceled and requires an accounting of all oil withdrawn under it. Also the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia has dismissed the special appeals of Messrs. Fall, Doheny and Sinclair in the conspiracy indictments. Both of these cases will in all probability go to the U. S. Supreme Court which is now hearing arguments in the Doheny case, regarding the Elk Hills lease; but something is gained by having the defendants forced to take the appeal and not the government.

THE language of the Federal Circuit Court (through Judge William S. Kenyon, former Senator from Iowa) is particularly vigorous. The Court holds that whether or not the government suffered loss as a result of the contract is unimportant. What matters is the circumstances under which it was made, and the Court holds that "the entire transaction is tainted with favoritism, collusion and corruption." There was no danger, the Court declares, of loss of the oil through drainage as has been alleged. The decision recites the facts of Sinclair's alleged "loan" of $25,000 to Secretary Fall, and mentions other episodes involving them, as to which the participants have refused to testify, and says:

> Our conclusion is that the government has sustained its claim that the lease and contract were procured by fraud and corruption and that they should be canceled.

What will now be said, we wonder, by the numerous important Republican newspapers (and some Democratic ones) which have for two and one-half years belittled the investigation of the oil leases and abused Senator Walsh, on the ground that the stories of corruption were unjustified, were mere mud-slinging by politicians? Will they now admit that despite their Jove-like assurance, they were wrong? Or will they say nothing, relying, as they have so often and so successfully, on the inability of the public to remember anything more than two weeks, three days and four hours?

TIMES, as some acute observer may have remarked already, do change. A few years ago publishers, play producers and magazine editors were a unit in refusing to look at "war stuff." The public, they explained, never wanted to hear of the War again. Then came What Price Glory with its salty humor and good-natured violence, and went King Canute one better by turning the tide. Now the struggling author finds his chances much enhanced if he will put a Sam Browne belt across his hero's manly bosom and encase his heroine in a nurse's fetching, spotless uniform. We note with pleasure the birth of a contemporary, the War Stories Magazine. As its name implies, it is to be devoted solely to tales about the so-called Great War. An editorial announcement explains that nothing but fiction will be used; which prompts us to offer, unasked, a suggestion. Why not reprint as a starter the most famous of all pieces of war fiction, Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles, which explains just who is morally responsible for starting the War?

WHETHER or not the Recording Angel has put down the figures, the New York press has reported the fact that Yale University's first voluntary chapel service attracted only 200 fewer undergraduates than the corresponding service a year ago, at which attendance was compulsory. The same newspapers carried a hint that Princeton might follow suit in the not too distant future. This is one of those questions over which we cannot muster any great excitement. Compulsory chapel in colleges is an anachronism, and as such carries its own doom with it. It will eventually become so incongruous, so humorous, that the "deans and presidents" once appealed to by Wordsworth must at last "give ear" and abolish it for good and all. But what we should like to find out, apropos of this subject, is: How much has compulsory, or voluntary, chapel to do with religion, and how many souls has Yale saved by this step? The Recording Angel is probably the only one who could tell us.

THE recently elected Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Rt. Rev. John Gardner Murray, has taken a firm stand against 99 44-100 percent Americanism. In an article in the October issue of the American Church Monthly, Bishop Murray writes: "Good is in the ascendant, and the comparative ratio of increase [of population] is decidedly in its favor. We are living in

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the best age of human history." Is it by accident that the leaders of our public life are such defiant optimists? Or is it one more indication of why we are so popular in Europe?

SPECIAL interest attaches to the candidacy of Parley Parker Christensen for Senator in Illinois on the progressive ticket. Christensen, unlike Frank L. Smith, Republican, and George Brennan, Democrat, has not taken money from Sam Insull, the Tsar of public utility corporations in the state. The Federation of Labor endorsed Smith on his labor record in Congress, heedless of the protests of the Chicago Street Railway employes who had felt his hand as chairman of the state Public Utilities Commission. So far as we are informed it has not withdrawn this endorsement in spite of the revelations by the Senatorial slush fund investigation. The state of leadership in the Illinois labor movement is revealed by the action of Frank Farrington, President of the Illinois Mine Workers, who lately accepted a position paying $25,000 with the Peabody Coal Company. If the rank and file of labor in Illinois will break away from its leaders and record its vote for Christensen there will be some hope for labor in politics.

THE question of the American resident abroad, like that of the American tourist, is one of which serious account must ultimately be taken. The position of both is certain to be affected by the way in which foreigners are treated in this country. The expatriate, who lives abroad because he likes the country and the life, is less objectionable, on the whole, than two other classes—those who seek foreign lands to exploit them or to reform them. In regard to the latter class a prominent news agency informs us that the Coolidge administration holds a more enlightened position than its predecessors. The President believes, we are told, that missionary activities depend for success on the good will of the peoples to which they are directed, and that it is a silly contradiction in terms for missionaries to require the protection of gun-boats and marines. It will be interesting to see what progress the administration makes in extending this eminently sound and sensible view to business interests.

A National Election without an Issue

RARELY in the political history of any nation which is supposed to base its government on the competition of rival parties for the approval of public opinion, has it been so difficult to read any meaning into the official political controversies or to expect any fruitful results from them as it is in the America of today. The American people are now engaged in passing on the rival claims of two major parties for the control during the coming two years of their national legislature. The Democratic party expects to gain decisively at the expense of the Republicans. It has a good chance of depriving its opponents of the present majority in the Senate and of cutting the Republican majority in the House of Representatives to small dimensions. Yet we defy a Democratic apologist to allege a sound reason why the electorate which deliberately bestowed a vote of confidence upon the Republican party in 1924 should decide to shift it to the Democrats in 1926. If the Democrats are victorious in November, their triumph will be undeserved. It will be the result merely of a meaningless, mechanical and miseducational reverse swing of the political pendulum.

The voters who decided to elect Calvin Coolidge President two years ago and strengthened his right arm with a Republican Congress have no reason to be discontented with the record of his administration. He has furnished them with precisely the kind of government which he promised. He pledged himself in general to govern the American nation for the benefit of American industry and business. He promised in particular to avoid all agitation and legislation which would unsettle trade and tend to diminish its volume and its profits, to do his best to promote prosperity, to economize the cost of government, to relieve large incomes of the burden of the super-taxes and so far as possible to regard any interference by government in business as an evil. He has scrupulously redeemed these pledges. The American nation is on the whole prosperous and seemingly contented.

The communities which depend chiefly on agriculture for their subsistence have not, it is true, shared in this prosperity. The Republican majority in Congress under Coolidge's leadership has done nothing to remedy the grievances of the farmers, but the farmers had no reason to anticipate that it would. Ever since the deflation of 1921 they have failed to share in the improved standard of living of the other classes in the community. It looked in 1922 and 1923 as if they would revenge themselves upon the Republican business man's-government for its neglect of their interests, but in 1924 their revolt faded away and as a class they helped to swell the Republican majority of that year. Inasmuch as they voted for Coolidge in spite of his manifest disinclination to pledge his party to pass the kind of legislation which they demanded, they have no reason to complain of his refusal to introduce the farmers into the sacred fold of privileged and protected interests. It would have been treachery on his part to repudiate Mr. Mellon.

If the Coolidge administration has not deserved to lose the confidence of its supporters in 1924, the Democrats have done less than nothing to earn a reversal of their contemptuous rejection by the electorate in that year. By nominating Davis the

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party refused to take up the challenge of Coolidge Republicanism, and to offer to the American people a genuine alternative to a business man's government. The Democratic majority in Congress has followed in the footsteps of the New York Convention. In its tenderness to business and in its desire to give aid and comfort to the plutocracy it has gone beyond Mr. Mellon. During the last session of Congress it assisted him in reducing the estate and the super-taxes; and now it proposes to use up the remaining surplus not in debt reduction but in still further relief for the income tax-payers. The truth is, of course, that the existing Democratic Senators and members of Congress are chiefly Southerners, and apart from a survival here and there of Populism, the politics of the South is dominated by capitalists who are subservient to the bankers and industrialists of the North and Middle West. Although cotton planting is still the major economic activity of the South, the active and aggressive elements in its political and social life are the manufacturers, the financiers and the owners of its public utilities.

If the Democrats win a victory in the Congressional elections next month, they will obtain the power to embarrass the policy of the administration without possessing either the disposition or the ability to put the victory to productive use. Under our irresponsible American system, the only benefit which may accrue from the loss by a President of the control of Congress in the middle of his term is the opportunity which is thereby offered to the opposition party to organize an attack on the administration and to realize for the electorate a possible alternative to the existing government. But the Democratic party in Congress has ceased to be a genuine alternative to Republicanism without ceasing to be the official opposition. Judging by its past record it will during the interval before the next Presidential election merely parade its own ineptitude, alienate the electorate and smooth the way for the Republican victory in 1928. The function of the Democratic party in the existing business man's government of the country is to occupy without vitalizing the office of an opposition to Republicanism and so to delay and embarrass the formation of a new party which might issue a sincere challenge to Coolidge Republicanism.

No doubt the time has not yet arrived for the formation of an aggressive alternative to the Republican party. Its coming may be delayed for another four or another eight years. Until it does come our national politics is bound to remain exceptionally meaningless, futile, cheap and intellectually dishonest. The Republican party has elected itself the professional defender of a business oligarchy, which has survived one serious attack and is threatened with another, but whose domination is not at this moment seriously threatened. In order to justify their professions its leaders are obliged to advertise remote dangers as imminent, to devise safeguards which are not needed, to foment fears in order to exploit the opportunity of allaying them and to insist on closing their own minds and the public mind against even the consideration of needed and inoffensive reforms. They are united chiefly by their apprehensions, their inhibitions, their tabus and by the existing momentum of their industrial and political success. The impotence of their opponents deprives their war-cries of reality and their own organization of real cohesion. Like the Democrats they win victories which they do not deserve and collect discordant sectional and class groups into majorities which are incapable of positive political achievement. At a moment when America needs political eagles and lions, who are capable of seeing far and of fighting hard for their quarry, the Republican party is breeding only political flies and mosquitoes. Their rule does not as yet provoke any effective popular resentment or opposition, but it is gradually inducing a popular political impatience which may in the end be more unmanageable than an effective and sincere opposition party would be. The American people are becoming bored by the insipidity, the futility and the pretenses and the shams of contemporary Republican rule. Another four years of Coolidge will prepare thousands of good Americans to go forth and howl in some political wilderness rather than submit any longer to the intolerable tedium of keeping cool and dull with Coolidge.

It remains to be seen what the effect of this increasing popular impatience and instability will be. In the beginning, of course, it will accomplish about as much good as the nervous tantrums of a woman who is bored by the dullness of a marriage to which she herself has consented and from which she cannot escape. Politics will become a more precarious activity than it is now and more exciting but hardly more fruitful or sincere. Little by little, however, the political conscience and intelligence of the American people will free itself from their present handicaps and begin to assist themselves. Our higher politics is deprived of idealistic motive power by the collapse of the two most recent enthusiasms of the American democracy—the enthusiasm for political and social reform which flowered in the progressive agitation of 1912 and the somewhat forced international chivalry which sent an American army to Europe in order to safeguard democracy and extinguish militarism. The most important result up to date of the first enthusiasm appears to be the Prohibition Amendment and the Volstead act whose operation has temporarily disgusted many common or garden Americans with all legislative reforms. As to their second enthusiasm, the political consequences of the War have cooled it down, and the American people today find it hard to remember the artificially manufactured fevers and obsessions of their belligerent days. They have suffered ever since from disillusionment, cynicism and an utter lack of appetite for anything

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resembling a political crusade. But this cynicism and apathy are temporary aberrations and will not last. The time will come when popular impatience with Republican rule will be reinforced by sufficient popular grievances; and when this time does come, the business man's government will be confronted for the first time with a powerful and a thorough-going opposition.

Both the Democrats and the Republicans by their tactics during the last Presidential election decreed that the only general alternative to Republican rule would necessarily be a radical alternative. William G. McAdoo tried to interest the Democratic party in standing for an opposition to Republicanism, which was aggressive and not radical, but the Democrats would have none of it. The Republicans won a great victory by insisting that the only genuine alternative to Republican rule was radical and by thus disqualifying the Democrats. The Democrats in Congress have acted as if the Republican contention were true. American political battles will remain meaningless and as futile as the Congressional election of this fall until it becomes possible to fight Republicanism with some grim and hard-headed combination of agricultural with urban discontent. The Democrats will continue for a few years to win victories at Congressional elections. They may even slip in a non-Republican President through some aperture provided by Republican dissensions. But such a victory would be accidental and evanescent. The Republicans embody the prestige, the success, the vested interests and the dogmas of proud and triumphant American capitalism. The Democrats embody only a slightly more timid and scrupulous version of the same system. Both parties seek to suppress rather than to encourage the emergence of any political group which is dedicated to the persistent and thorough-going alteration of this system. And when such a group does emerge it will function as a national party only by displacing the Democracy from its existing job as the recognized opponent of Republicanism.

Europe's Industrial Peace

IMAGINE a national boundary line separating the iron mines of Minnesota and the steel plants of South Chicago and Gary from the coking coal mines of Pennsylvania and West Virginia and the steel plants of Pittsburgh. Imagine ownership of iron, coal and steel separate on each side of the line, and the lords of the industry utilizing their respective national governments to aid in their competitive struggle with each other by tariffs and even by wars of conquest. There you have something like the situation of France and Germany, with the steel masters of both nations dependent to a large extent on Lorraine iron, on Ruhr coke, and longing each to control the valuable properties in the Saar valley and on both sides of the line.

There have been apparently well founded allegations that the rivalry of the French and German heavy industries was one of the chief causes of the War. Poincaré, who has been charged by historians with complicity on the French side, has long been recognized as a politician close to the steel men. The French nationalists have derived much of their support from those affiliated with the Comité des Forges. It was they who held out for maximum territorial concessions in the peace. It was Poincaré who, when Germany defaulted on the reparations specified in the Treaty, occupied the Ruhr, much to the discomfiture of the British. Poincaré held on to the Ruhr long after it became apparent to the least clever that his action was postponing rather than bringing nearer Germany's ability to pay. "Payment in kind"—so far the chief source of French revenue from reparations—has consisted largely in coal and coke.

One interpretation of French foreign policy since 1919 revolves about iron and steel, coal and coke, and it fits the known facts remarkably well. According to this hypothesis, it soon became apparent to the French that they could not hold and keep enough former German territory to make their heavy industries independent and predominant in Europe. It was apparent that the mills and mines on both sides of the border formed a natural economic unit. Suggestions from the German side that the two groups should join and make peace were not lacking, and found supporters in France. But the chief difficulty concerned the respective shares in the proposed combination. The German steel masters would not grant the French all they thought they should have. This prompted Poincaré's move in the Ruhr. He was fully conscious that it would disorganize production and make reparations payments more difficult. But it would also injure the German steel industries and curb their profits. It was thus an act of sabotage to win a concession—something like a strike of labor. But the Germans, on their side, counted on the French financial weakness to undermine Poincaré's position. His régime was costly; his pretense in occupying the Ruhr was that he was striving to collect the impossible total of reparations due; as long as he maintained this pretense he could not proceed to collect the necessary revenues by domestic taxation. In this trial of endurance the Germans were victorious. The franc fell disastrously—some say with help from the British, who did not wish to see French industry strengthened too greatly. Poincaré was forced to accept the Morgan credit, and to take the first steps toward the formulation of the Dawes plan. He was also forced to inaugurate his program of higher taxes—which was a large factor in his defeat. Temporarily checked on the political field, the French steel men turned to the industrial. As a consequence of the Dawes settlement, German

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currency was restored and stabilized. But the franc kept on falling, and the French nationalists did not appear too anxious to take the early and drastic steps necessary to stop it. They had a marked advantage in export trade as long as foreign customers could buy their products in a depreciating currency. German industrial depression followed; France was, on the surface, highly "prosperous." As soon as Germany was permitted by the terms of the Treaty, she retaliated with an increased import duty. But while this injured the French steel trade in Germany, it did not help the German steel trade in export markets. Apparently the German steel magnates conceded something. A state of equilibrium was reached in the struggle; the Franco-German-Belgian iron and steel consortium was formed; quotas of the total production were fixed for each nation which gave the French a right to produce much more of their possible capacity than the Germans.

If this industrial treaty is based on an enduring foundation, and is capable of producing satisfaction for the parties who made it, it is a far more realistic and effective settlement of the outstanding difficulties between France and Germany during and after the War than any other international event—even than Locarno itself. For as long as the powerful heavy industries in both countries refrain from depending on their respective governments to injure or restrict their rivals, but instead exert their influence for amity, there may be enough change in the balance of forces which influence international events to cause them to drift in a new direction. The way is now cleared for final adjustment of tariffs and trade treaties, of reparations, and even of bothersome disputes in more remote parts of the world.

But if the new trust promotes amity on the Continent, it may, some fear, strengthen the Franco-German producers in competition with the English and Americans. A quick appraisal of the situation, however, fails to show how this can be. The British were invited to come in, but preferred to remain independent. The Americans are already in to a substantial extent through their recently acquired holdings in German industry. The very nature of the plan would prevent it from being an engine of competition. It is not an organic merger under a single management like the United States Steel Corporation. It is rather an agreement of independent concerns to limit production and hold each party to a fixed quota, through a sort of pooling arrangement. In so far as it is effective it will serve to maintain prices in Europe. This provides an easier market for the British and Americans than overproduction and cut-throat competition. To be sure, France, Germany and Belgium may strive to keep the European market for themselves and bar out imports by a Continental Zollverein. That is at present unlikely on account of the hold of American capital on both Germany and France. Even if it should come, however, it could not be a serious matter to the steel makers in this country, whose exports across the Atlantic do not account for much of their total production. In South America and the Orient trade will be won by those able to offer low prices and to extend financial tentacles. These abilities do not arise from restriction of production, but from large-scale manufacture, efficient methods and surplus capital resources. We have little reason to fear in any of these respects.

The main dangers in the arrangement arise, not from intensified competition, but from monopoly. These dangers threaten both workers and consumers. Suppose that the American steel owners, who have an interest in the German plants and therefore in the Continental pool, are well but quietly assured that their markets will not be invaded. But suppose that with the advance of technical methods in Europe, the wages of European iron and steel workers, now low in comparison with those in the United States, are not increased. The European plants will in that event attain a real advantage in cost. Will not the bogey of "foreign competition" and "cheap European labor" be invoked to reduce wages here and to raise the tariff tribute from the American consumer? A national monopoly is difficult to manage, even by the power of the state, but international monopoly faces no balancing political power of equal extent—and no economic power either, unless the international organizations of labor should become much stronger than they are. Here is where the danger lies. When great industrial aggregations cease to need national states to protect their interests, but fear the development of an international power capable of coping with them, we may perhaps see the same kind of campaign against world political organization and in favor of "nation's rights" which the private economic interests in the United States are now waging against federalism and in favor of "states' rights." It does not necessarily follow that because international economic rivalries are subdued, the task of world government becomes easier. In the international trust we meet the first hint of one of the great problems of the future.

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Russia Today

NO attempt to portray the situation in Russia would be complete without a frank statement regarding the difficulties of securing and separating the facts from the welter of half-truths and falsehoods which are always strewn along the path of revolution. There are, first of all, *subjective difficulties*. Most foreigners entering Russia encounter a totally new situation, something which is entirely strange to anything they have before known. We, of course, have long been accustomed to an era of capitalism, consequently the shades of thought and feeling with which we attack almost any problem are unconsciously and subtly affected. Coming into Russia we face an attempt to reconstruct a government along socialistic and communistic lines, and in consequence we find ourselves far from unbiased spectators. For instance, we tend to think of the G. P. U. (the Russian Secret Service) as a typical expression of a "terrible" phenomenon underlying the entire social structure of Russia, forgetting that every country has its G. P. U., especially in a period of war and revolution. We tend to mistake other relatively permanent characteristics of the situation, factors which would hold true under any régime, for the dire consequences of communism.

Reliable evidence is difficult to secure, moreover, because of the sharp division into classes. The workers and peasants comprise 93 percent of the population. They live in a different world from that of former generals, capitalists and nobility. There may be complete freedom for one, and rigid restriction for the other. One former militarist told me, "We are living in a prison house"; and this may be true for him, while the statement of a peasant may be equally true, "We are free as air, we now say what we please, for we are our own masters."

Anyone who tries to describe the situation as he sees it has to face the flood of misinformation, red or white, which has already created fixed stereotypes in many minds. Even during my stay in Russia a few weeks ago the rest of the world was keeping up its merry whirl of falsehoods about that country. A Helsingfors paper reported "violent armed uprising throughout Russia" and "the separation of the Ukraine from the Soviet Union," a Paris paper headlined a fictitious "attempted assassination of the Russian dictator Stalin" and "the seizure of the power by the opposition leader Trotsky" and an American journal announced that "Zinoviev has been placed under arrest and exiled to Siberia." In reality, except for a particularly severe inner party struggle, life has been going on as usual.

In view of the difficulties in the way of an investigator perhaps I may be pardoned a personal word about my own background. I have made two previous visits to Russia, and speak the language. In the course of the two months' visit from which I have just returned, I moved about the country freely, talking to all sorts of people on every sort of subject—including interviews with leaders ranging all the way from Chicherin to Stalin. Dressed in working clothes, and without any previous notice to anyone, I visited several factories, passing through the gates with the incoming workers, and moving from one department to another until someone got suspicious and took me to the factory committee. I followed a similar procedure with the peasants, dropping off a train at a way station, hiring an esvostchik and driving twenty versts into the country where I would stay overnight with some peasant family (sleeping in the barn usually, for reasons which every American soldier who went to France will fully understand).

After this investigation, I am convinced that the average worker feels vastly better off than under the Tsar. He is discontented economically (the average industrial wage per month is only 55 roubles: $27.50), but he has a host of rights and privileges which were never his before. It costs the Russian employer and the government upwards of 20 percent of the wages that are being paid the worker to provide him with various accessories such as accident, sickness, unemployment insurance and vacations with pay. His housing is either given free or at such low rental that it is almost a gift. These are all products of the Soviet revolution. Then, too, every factory has a workers' club and each member feels in some measure that he owns and runs the industry. The wage rate is revised every year by the employes in conference with the management and they are backed by a powerful trade union organization of over eight million members. A worker receives free medical attendance both for himself and his family. A working woman is entitled to two months' vacation, with pay, both before and after child birth. The rest homes for the laborer, comprising as they do the former summer palaces of the nobility in the Caucasus and in the Crimea, are probably the finest in the world.

The position of the peasant is less satisfactory. While conditions vary, he is probably not yet quite as well off economically as he was prior to the revolution. Yet in spite of this fact, as a whole his position is better. He has the land and is his own master to an unusual degree. Although peasants always grumble, some at least of them will spring to the defense of the Soviet if you yourself attack it and laud capitalism. Several stated to me their conviction that today the new experiment which is

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being tried involves self-government even if it also means poor government. They all speak proudly of their new coöperative stores, schools and libraries. However, they also feel jealous of the workers. Many said in effect, "The workers are the ones who have gained. They live at our expense."

The coöperative movement has been growing by leaps and bounds. The government will give credits, to start a coöperative, to almost any group of peasants no matter how poor. Thus in one district they had paid an average of less than fifty cents each, but the government gave them all the capital they needed. Consequently they do not feel the money is actually theirs and fail to safeguard it properly. Many managers have confessed to misappropriating funds; they call it "borrowing," but it is a criminal offense, and so regarded by the government. While inspecting the prisons I met many former employes of coöperatives in confinement.

The peasants have been jolted out of century-old habits and are beginning to abandon the wasteful three-year crop rotation system. Newer methods of agriculture are creeping in, aided by thousands of experts employed by the coöperatives to teach the peasants. Numbers of the villages have seen or heard of tractors and are eager to obtain them. Nearly every village boasts a reading club. Here communist propaganda is plentiful, it is true, but the amount of educational and agricultural material is also impressive. All in all, the position of the peasant while it may be lowered economically is certainly improved psychologically. In the large cities all over Russia beautiful homes of peasants, financed by the government, testify to the changed status. Nevertheless, the Communist party as a whole rightly feels nervous about the peasant's attitude.

For he holds the balance of power. It is true that Zinoviev and a small group of Communists feel that the nation should be industrialized at his expense. They would tax the fairly well-to-do and wealthy peasant heavily and exchange grain abroad for manufactured articles which in turn would be sold in the villages at high prices. The resulting profit would build and reëquip factories. This is the policy which has been called "living on the backs of the peasants." Stalin and the majority see clearly that in the long run Russia can only be successful if the government creates a harmonious union between the worker and the peasant. Consequently every new policy and every law is considered by them in the light of its effect on this union.

These differences partially explain the acute divisions in the party which culminated in secret "illegal" meetings and the expulsion of Zinoviev from the Political Bureau. To be sure there is also the question of personalities struggling for mastery. Zinoviev, Stalin and Trotsky are all key men and they have all played star rôles in the revolutionary drama. What more natural than that each should have desired increased power following the death of Lenin? Trotsky is easily the most brilliant, but he has played a lone hand too often and in the past has seemed to love notoriety—a fatal combination when it comes to winning the leadership of a group of individualistic communists. Zinoviev, as is well known, has been erratic, committing blunders in tactics and policy which have seriously harmed the Communist International. Stalin has had the merit of keeping in the background and of having made no serious mistakes in party policy, a fact which largely accounts for his control. Furthermore, he has always kept to a middle-of-the-road position. When Zinoviev wanted to exclude Trotsky from the party Stalin blocked the move, and again when he tried to exclude him from the all-powerful Political Bureau, it was Stalin who objected.

The rise of Stalin means a definite swing from a Western orientation and hope of an imminent European revolution to a constructive Russian policy. It must be remembered that Stalin is one of the few Bolsheviks who have not lived abroad. Trotsky, Zinoviev, Lenin, almost any of the other leaders, have been for long periods in France, Germany, Switzerland or England. Stalin in spite of his seven arrests remained in Russia working steadily for revolution. Perhaps one effect of this has been to make him incline toward a successful demonstration of communism in Russia rather than in foreign propaganda.

Stalin has not yet assumed the place of Lenin. The latter will always be considered "the father of the Soviet Republic." Thousands of pilgrims from all over Russia visit his mausoleum nightly to file silently past his body which has been so skilfully preserved that he seems to be asleep. Lenin Clubs by the thousand pay tribute to his memory demonstrating the reverence, as to a saint, in which he is held. Leaders of the party quote from Lenin as though his writings were a sacred revelation.

Yet Stalin in actual power has really almost reached the pinnacle which Lenin held. By so doing, however, he has consolidated a strong opposition bloc which somewhat weakens his position. He has against him Trotsky, Zinoviev, Krupskaya—Lenin's widow—Kamenev and others. To be sure they are divided among themselves as to their policies, but they are all united against Stalin. Being in the minority this opposition bloc demands complete freedom of discussion within the party. The communist rule is that there shall be freedom until a question has once been decided in party conference, but after that no discussion, only loyal obedience. Stalin in speaking to me of this difference of opinion said, "We as a fighting, working party, cannot afford to turn the Communist ranks into a discussion club. We have far too important work to do." Naturally, this makes it extremely difficult for a minority to prove its case in the face of a wrong majority decision.

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Stalin has probably won his place by methods not wholly unlike those of some American political bosses. He is a man of outstanding ability, with a magnetic personality, commanding the respect and confidence of two-thirds of the influential members. Once in control he has the enormous advantage of running the party mechanism and to some extent of controlling patronage. Stalin is too clever to permit a serious split in the party if he can avoid it. He has usually pursued a policy of taking over a good deal of the opposition program in its actuality without its phraseology, thus robbing his opponents of any real platform. Trotsky, Zinoviev and the rest of the opposition still retain office and can work if they will.

No one can predict the future course of events in Russia, but they will have to be very much more tragic and alarming than they have yet become really to jeopardize the Soviet government. My own feeling is that these very party quarrels are in a measure a sign of stability. If Russia were to be threatened by any serious danger, the Communists would be the first to compose their differences. The net result of the present situation is that Zinoviev will probably be removed as the head of the Communist International in the fall. The prospects for the harvest are good and there is little or no indication of serious disturbances which will threaten Stalin's control. Indeed, the writer would rather predict that some sort of compromise with Trotsky may be effected which would place him in a commanding position in the government.

JEROME DAVIS.

The Methodist Lobby

IT IS some years, now, since the churches of America first gave evidence of believing that reform may come not only through spiritual conviction from within but through the judicious application of a little helpful legislation from without. The political responsibility which this change has imposed is plain and unmistakable. To urge Christians not to go to moving picture shows on Sunday, for example, requires only a conviction that Sunday moving picture shows are harmful; but to disfranchise Sunday moving picture shows by law—as no less than nineteen great denominations of the church now formally propose—and then see to it that the law is not ignored, requires political organization and a constant check upon the politics of enforcement. Having made the decision that moral suasion needs the law behind it, the practical thing to do is to organize a lobby for that law just as effective as any lobby the packers, the Pullmans, the bakers, the brewers and the wool men ever brought to Washington. This is not theory. One has only to study the work of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals to see how sternly it is fact.

So far as the church lobby has evolved toward perfection in 1926, here is the perfect flower. For here is a church lobby in which there is no confusion of thought as to the efficacy of the secular arm and not even a traditional diffidence about putting the church in politics. The Methodist Board is very frankly a church lobby, flat-footedly informing Washington that from "a centre directly across the street from the Capitol" it is "directing and promoting" the cause of public morals on a national scale.

The Methodist Board makes no bones of its being interested in politics. So lively, in fact, is its interest that there are times when it adopts the vocabulary of the politician, advises politicians what to do with their own intra-party problems and throws itself briskly into the business of political prophecy. Thus we find it hazarding the opinion that "it is exceedingly doubtful if the Democrats could carry a single southern state with Governor Al Smith as a candidate."

Old-fashioned clergymen might object that what the Democratic party could and couldn't do with Governor Al Smith as a candidate is a novel field of speculation for God's missionaries. But the Methodist Board is a novel institution. It is the most up-to-date of the new church lobbies, and therefore the most interesting to study.

What does the Methodist Church do when it goes into politics in behalf of "public morals"? And what are "public morals"?

Annually the Methodist Board distributes some two million columns of news material to newspapers and periodicals in every corner of the country. This material carries the Board's opinions upon a variety of topics. Under the head of public morals it attacks immoral European "art," which it declares corrupts the native drama. It attacks boxing: not only professional boxing but inter-institutional collegiate boxing, declaring that several universities already stand humiliated "because some of their graduates have forgotten that they are supposed to be gentlemen." It attacks tobacco, asserting that "about half of the women in this country would just as soon be in close contact with a good healthy polecat as with a lighted cigarette or cigar." It attacks the intelligentsia, pointing out that these people "do not even know when the time has arrived for a haircut." It attacks gambling in any form, asserting it to be the direct incitement to "defalcations, embezzlements, suicides and broken homes." It attacks juvenile delinquency, distributing a leaflet (No. 114) by its secretary, Dancing in Our Public Schools. It attacks Mutt and Jeff when they joke about the Volstead act: "When anti-prohibition

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argument is put into the mouths of cartoon characters," the Board declares, "it is foul tactics." And adds: "This poisonous campaign of suggestion finds expression in a thousand ways in jokes, in vaudeville patter, in cartoons, in comic strips, in popular songs, and even in slang. What is the effect of this suggestion upon unthinking people in Kansas and Indiana and a score of other states which would have no difficulty whatever in enforcing prohibition but for this propaganda?"

This is one side. On the other, the Board has its own enthusiasms. It stands logically and wholeheartedly for prohibition, which it believes to be not only morally sound but economically the determining factor in this prosperity we now enjoy: "But for prohibition this country would be in the miserable financial and industrial position of the European nations." In addition, the Board stands for a Christian Sunday, an open ballot box, free education, the compulsory reëstablishment of the Bible "in the tax-supported schools of every state," a uniform marriage and divorce law, and a direct and forceful notification to the European nations that their ways must conform to our ways if we are to cut our rates of interest on their war debts. "America has a right to demand," the Board declares, "that money honestly owed to American taxpayers shall not be spent on the boulevards of Paris or in the beer gardens of European provinces."

Now here, if iteration and reiteration be the test, are cardinal points in the political faith of the first church board to go in for active politics. One looks over such material, and with the early Christian vocabulary in mind observes a shift in emphasis. The early Christians were forever talking of motes and beams, of camels and needles' eyes, of glass houses and first stones, of dissociating work from money payments, of acting toward one's neighbors with that speculative kindness which one would choose to have oneself, of getting rid of property by throwing it into the common stock ("woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation"), of simple and direct alternatives which challenged the very fundamentals of men's living. What are "public morals," anyway? If one looks through the output of this board of the Methodist Church for what it has to say of private property and the salvation of the soul and tolerance toward other people's points of view and the whole gamut of ethical and moral values which have worried the souls of men for ages, one discovers:

Thou shalt not box.
Thou shalt not dance.
Thou shalt not play ball on Sunday.
Thou shalt not smoke.
Thou shalt not bet.
Thou shalt not go to immoral plays.
Thou shalt not drink.
Thou shalt not make fun of drinking.
Thou shalt not make fun of making fun of drinking.
Thou shalt not forgive the debts of drinking nations.

Surely it is a somewhat strange ethics moving in an orbit of peremptory values which enlists the energies of this active Board: an ethics which presumes to lie within the field of public morals but which smacks familiarly of public customs. Drop a man from another civilization down into this world of ours, show him the processes by which men acquire wealth, make war, shield special privilege and exploit the victims of their own ruthless and haphazard systems—then show him a credo which began with boxing, dancing and cigars, and he might say: "But, man alive! if public morals interest you why don't you talk of poverty and slums and excess profits and vestrymen who raid the market and more vestrymen who juggle with their tax returns? Why don't you talk of statesmen who play politics with local prejudice, and pious men who buy elections, and good friends of the Constitution who pass laws to keep black men from voting? Why don't you talk of nations that break promises to smaller nations? Public morals? A jazz band playing in a park on Sunday sends a chill of horror down your spine; but when a company of rich men plan deliberately to establish a government-protected peon labor system to grow rubber in the Philippines, you never peep."

The Philippines are a long way off, and of course it can be argued that the church has no concern with rubber. It can be argued that the rubber plant is a material thing, though the harm done by the tobacco plant is spiritual. It can be argued that peon labor, profits, sweatshops, slush funds, short sales and million dollar melons are of the earth and earthy, mundane affairs upon which it is not the church's business to have an immediate opinion. Or it can be argued that the reverse is true, and that there is no human relationship however remote from heavenly things in which some interest of the church is not at stake. Whichever way one's theory runs, there is a point on which agreement might be possible. If there is one mission in the run of political affairs in which the church can properly share, it is the mission of preaching tolerance, self-restraint and understanding.

We live in a day when men, to be sure, do not always bother to go to the polls, but when the spirit behind those struggles in which they are really interested is truculent and bitter. Experience after experience proves how difficult it is to talk of the Klan, of prohibition, of the Catholic Church or even of the sidewalks of New York without revealing totally unlike points of view which sharpen the edge of anger. What is the church to do and say in these circumstances, if the church is to do anything or say anything? Is the influence of the church to count on the side of patience, common sense and an effort to dissociate political controversy from a background of sensation? Or is the influence of the church to count on the side of politicians who exploit local prejudice and ride in on the easily aroused emotions of factional distrust?

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Certainly clergymen are not villains, and no one who was not frankly cantankerous would deliberately choose the latter of these two alternatives. Yet mischief is often as much a matter of effect as motive; and there is such a thing as hammering away at one goal so determinedly as to lose sight of all others. Let us take one instance:

The Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals is angry with the city of New York. It is angry with New York because there are many people in New York who like to drink and smoke and dance and go to theatres on Sunday. It is the Board's privilege to be angry. But unfortunately it is true, meantime, that there is real risk of what may come of a rapidly growing antagonism between New York on one side and the rest of the country on the other. Does the Methodist Board do what it can to preach tolerance in this quarrel, to explain away that part of it which comes from sheer misunderstanding and to warn against absurd exaggeration? Here is one sample of its counsel:

Calling New York "a foreign city" in which "the great mass of un-Americans" is apparently on top, the Board has also warned the rest of the country to "remember the propaganda which is systematically organized [in New York] to incite to crime in the South and West. . . ."

How reasonable is such a statement, how self-restrained, how likely to add to the world's stock of brotherly love and Christian understanding?

There comes to mind, if one reads on about crime waves organized in New York against the South and West, about un-Americans and a foreign city, the vague form of another organization no less active, no less emphatic and no less watchful over Congress than the Methodist Board of Public Morals. This organization is the Ku Klux Klan. For really what is this egging on of section against section if not doctrine likewise fostered by the Klan? Nor does coincidence of effort stop at this point.

Certainly it would be short-sighted to lump the millions of Methodists in this country behind one board in Washington and suggest that they know all about this board, and know all that it is doing, and feel the way it feels about "foreigners" and the impossibility of tolerance and the irreconcilability of quarrels. But it would also be short-sighted to study the record and not be impressed by evidence on three points:

First, between this Board and the Klan there is at least enough identity of interest, in a common hostility to "big-city morals," "foreigners," "modernism," etc., so that the Board has never denounced the Klan, though it has denounced many other things, and though the Klan has been a burning issue for at least five years.

Second, by its own admission this Board keeps a record of the "religious and fraternal affiliations" of every Congressman. So does the Klan. Both spot their Catholics, their Knights of Columbus, their Methodists, their Baptists. Why? The Board may argue, as it does argue, that all this is simply necessary information in each man's case "which will aid us in understanding him and his probable action in any contingency." But what is a "contingency" if not a supposedly democratic vote in Congress or in a free election? And what is a Methodist Board or any other church board doing when into its campaigns for legislation it introduces the question of "religious and fraternal affiliations"?

Finally, it seems clear that if the Methodist Church is in fact to dissociate itself from Klan methods and Klan results, then the Methodist Church will have to look sharp not only in Washington but in more than one of its small-town pastorates. For if one reads the Klan press, Methodism is there—in small informal friendly incidents—at every corner. The thing is unmistakable. Here is the Ku Klux Klan of Mechanicsburg, Pa., coming into the Methodist Church, and the Rev. Harry Daniels delivering a sermon on Great Patriotic Movements. Here is the Ku Klux Klan of Mantua, N. J., arranging a special service in the Methodist Church, and the pastor turning his church over to the Grand Dragon. Here is the Ku Klux Klan of Potomac, Va., dropping in on the Methodist Church, two hundred strong, and a Klan speaker addressing the congregation on the ethics of his order. Here is the pastor of the Methodist Church in Lima, Ohio, delivering a sermon on the principles of Klancraft. Here is the Ku Klux Klan of Staunton, Va., descending on the Methodist Church in full regalia, and the Rev. J. C. Bolton preaching to the Ku Klux Klan of Easton, Pa., and the Rev. C. B. Wagner preaching to the Ku Klux Klan of El Paso, Ill. Here is the Ku Klux Klan of Kersey, Pa., marching into the Methodist Church, presenting the Rev. C. P. Hulburn with a purse, thanking him for a task well done, and marching out to the strains of Onward Christian Soldiers. . . . One could go on adding incident to incident. For this is but the beginning of a record, clipped casually from a single source in a single month, of an entente cordiale too significant to be ignored, a friendly alliance of Church and Klan in many a smaller town to which a steady train of such events bears evidence.

One wonders. Is it this background of smouldering resentment against big cities, liberalism by any name, "evolution," "foreigners" and kindred ogres of the Ku Klux Klan which sets the pace for the Methodist Board in Washington? Or has the Methodist Board in Washington waxed so well as to have left its imprint on its background?

To this query the first experiment of a church board in active politics has brought us.

CHARLES MERZ.

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Washington Notes

THE newspaper men who cover the White House are boiling mad, and for once I sympathize with them. The spark which set off their usually non-inflammable tempers was the great Bruce Barton interview with President Coolidge which the Associated Press smeared over the front pages of America a few days ago. "Here we are," say the Corps of Correspondents, "compelled day in and day out to put words into the mouth of the Official Spokesman, under the strictest orders never to quote the careful Calvin. If he says something he afterward finds reason to regret, he just denies he ever said it or complains that we got his ideas all wrong, and we are left holding the bag. Yet now he lets Barton, who isn't even a newspaper man, but a writer of books and an advertising agent, quote him verbatim to the extent of 4,500 words in an official and approved interview when he won't even let one of us bring a stenographer to the press conferences so as to have some sort of accurate record of what he did and didn't say." The White House reporters are so wrought up that some of them are asking their papers—those which don't accept Cal as a perfect and changeless combination of Buddha, Socrates and George Washington—to renew the drive for abolition of the Spokesman once and for all.

My heart bleeds for the boys. Their fortnightly repudiation and excoriation by the President as a lot of blundering sapheads—which they themselves must duly report to the waiting world—long ago ceased to seem humorous to me. At the same time I will wager five good cents, in depreciated coin of the realm, that their efforts will get just exactly nowhere. The Official Spokesman is too good a device for the President to give him up without a struggle—and compared to making the little man let go of something he wants to keep, an underwater fight with an octopus seems about as desperate as a game of tiddledywinks.

In this case he has one alibi which has some merit. The Bruce Barton interview dealt with personal matters, while the outpourings of the Official Spokesman discuss national and international affairs. Logically, one might suppose that the more important the statement, the more desirable it would be for the person behind it to accept responsibility. Still, the good Calvin has precedent behind him when he takes the opposite view—and precedent is pretty nearly all-powerful with him, especially when it points in the direction he wants to take.

For my part I don't know whether the Bruce Barton interview was a piece of Republican party propaganda, an example of the Associated Press's great new policy of livening up its news report, or just a shrewd bit of publicity in the interest of Bruce himself, he being one of the owners of a very big and successful advertising agency. Whatever its raison d'être, it was an exceedingly skilful job. Nobody knows better than Barton what the common people of the country are really interested in. He is aware that most of them had much rather hear that the President's ambition as a boy was to keep store than to find out why within three weeks in September he reversed himself on the World Court. I leave it to hairsplitters to decide how much of the interview was Coolidge and how much Barton, and content myself with remarking that it was a campaign document in excelsis.

The President needs what crumbs of comfort he can get nowadays. Politically it begins to look as though his run of good luck were breaking at last. In Massachusetts his own especial friend and sponsor, Senator Butler, has a good chance of being defeated this fall by former Senator David I. Walsh, running on a state Democratic platform which is as wet as wet can be. In New York Jimmie Wadsworth, another stalwart Republican, will have the fight of his life to beat Tammany's Justice Rob Wagner, the G. O. P. in that state being hopelessly divided over prohibition.

Ex-Senator Atlee Pomerene (Dem.) is in the lists against the worthy Willis in Ohio. He is more popular than Willis, and is making good use of the Illinois and Pennsylvania scandals, with telling effect. Brother Willis hates to be reminded that he not only voted to seat Newberry, but was the author of the resolution which let him in. Out in Illinois, the chances of the Democratic boss, George Brennan, in the Senatorial race have suddenly been much improved by the candidacy of Hugh Magill as an independent Republican. Magill is Secretary of the National Council of Religious Education and a fervent dry. Among his backers, I am told, is Julius Rosenwald, the mail-order king. Magill offers himself as a candidate so that decent Republicans, appalled by the flood of public utility money poured out for Smith in the primary, will have a chance to cast a self-respecting vote; but the result is likely to be a victory for Brennan. This is especially probable if the astute George has, as I am told, cooked up a deal with the Republican machine in Cook County (Chicago) whereby it gets the local offices and he goes to the Senate. A dreadful story to tell about the noble Mr. Brennan!—but then, so many things in politics are dreadful, are they not?

Everyone concedes, privately, that the Republican control of the Senate is gone. In the Sixty-ninth Congress there were fifty-six Republicans, thirty-nine Democrats and one Farmer-Laborite, which gave the G. O. P. a nominal majority of eight. This eight, however, included Borah, Brookhart (unseated in favor of Steck, but now the "regular" Republican candidate in Iowa), Couzens, Norris, Frazier, Nye and La Follette. It also included Cummins, now dead, and McKinley, Pepper and Lenroot, all defeated in the primaries. The Democrats need only nine votes to get not merely control by fusion with the Progressives, but an actual party majority. There are thirteen states from which they hope to get these needed nine seats—Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nevada, New York, Ohio and Oklahoma. Nine out of thirteen, they say, is not an unreasonable expectation.

With four pivotal states like Illinois, Ohio, New York and Massachusetts all in the doubtful column, I don't blame Calvin for shivering as he lies abed these cool autumn nights and thinks of the frost which is creeping over his party. You can argue of course that he is really

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better off if he loses control of the Senate this year. It gives him a perfect alibi; he can explain his failure to do anything between now and 1928 by blaming it on the Democrats. While this is true, the blow to his personal prestige if he loses even two of these four states, will in my opinion be pretty nearly fatal. It will hearten the large and growing element in the Republican party which doesn't like the noble Coolidge, has never liked him, believes that politically he has shot his bolt, and intends to strain every nerve to put him permanently on the shelf before the next Republican national convention.

Washington. T. R. B.

Charlot in Rome

ON my right sit a young American painter, all talent and florid industry, and a friend of his, a Genoese lady of a great family; the three of us have come from our hotel in Rome to see La febbre del' oro, which is going at two theatres simultaneously, after having been already shown in Rome, and which I have seen in other cities posted as La strada verso l'oro, The Gold Fever and The Street to Gold.

Before the lights go off we speak of the movies, the cinema.

For his part, the painter says, he adores Italian movies, when he gets back to New York or goes to an American film in Italy he finds it very flat and mild, after the heaving and panting, the fire and eye-rolling of the Italian film stars. He never tires of seeing their bosoms heave with great sighs of love and despair; he delights in their rich clothes and lavish chambers, those beds swathed in lace, billowing with satin, wreathed with damask hangings, he delights in their whiskered princes and tragic young men; and most of all he is happy when the pinnacle is reached and they chew rose leaves.

He thinks the Italian cinema artists have talent then? the Signora asks. At crises, the painter says, they have, their fire comes through. But the cinema method, where the director is everything, the actors mere machines, told to smile, swallow, weep, as the director decides, such a method is beastly. Ah, yes, she has seen plays being produced, the lady says, such a method can never make a great art. She returns the compliment by telling us something of the American movies that she likes.

Tome Meeks, this descendant of the great duke and admiral declares, she likes ah very much! He is so beeg and he does such things, and you cannot but like his smile, ah, that is a smile indeed! Yes, apart perhaps from Charlie Chaplin, who is of course unique, her favorite protagonista is Tom Mix. I recall the many posters for Tom Mix that I have seen over Italy, in famous old theatres, in slums. He is a favorite, and there are, too, the posters for Costance Talmadge, Riccardo Cortez, Perla Bianca. A Roman prince, the next head of a great house, has told me that his favorite artist is Mary Pickford. And plastered over Rome now are the announcements of Fatty Arbuckle, his play is called Fatty e l'amore infranto. On every postcard stand are photographs of these players and many another, very few of them Italian, most of them from Hollywood.

Three pictures of Valentino's are in Rome this week, The Four Horsemen, Lo Sceico and The Young Rajah, and more to follow. Valentino came from the region near Bari on the eastern coast of Italy. But here his pictures have been under a cloud. It was partly because his quality was not very Italian, more Spanish indeed, with that static method and grave emphasis. But the direct reason for this unpopularity has been due to Valentino's changing his citizenship. With this new spirit working in Italy, with a growing national sense and tightening racial nerves and consciousness, Valentino's giving up his country was deeply resented. Our Marconi, they said, look at him, he lives in England, he is more English than Italian, but he is still an Italian citizen. A boycott arose against the Valentino films. In Sicily a hall was wrecked by the mob for daring to show this actor. Valentino, himself, it is said, at length wrote a letter to Mussolini, giving the arguments for such a change, and Mussolini is said to have sent out an order that the boycott should cease. Now that Valentino is dead the theatres and newspapers are full of him.

The lights are off, the film begins. Toward those snowy high passes press the line of adventurers, in their worn clothes, their backs bent, their frying pans, picks, ropes and so on very much to the fore. Some of the details are difficult for this audience, the frying pans and the general conditions of the event. But presently Charlie Chaplin enters and a gale of happy laughter runs over the house, followed by an attention very marked. Indeed as the picture goes on the silence is much greater than it is at the opera in Italy and as still as a mass compared to Italian theatres. The place is packed to the doors.

Then almost at once begins the practice common in all Italian cinemas. The Gold Rush has not been on two minutes before something is left out, you remember that Charlie Chaplin stood before you much longer, gave you a fuller statement of that first moment. This cutting will shorten the time necessary to run off the film and thus allow for more repetitions in an evening and so more spectators and more tickets. As the picture proceeds, the hunt for gold, the dinner on the shoe, the Christmas dream and finally that last act—which drops so under the level of Charlie Chaplin and of the picture—the cutting appears frequently enough, half a minute less of this, half a minute less of that, two minutes pared off a scene, now and then a whole scene taken out. We see nothing of the bear that in those first moments comes sniffing round the cliff and later appears when the men are starving in the hut, which last without the first loses its point. Even the serving and eating of the shoe is shortened, though you might think every second of it precious and immortal and though the Italian audience gave it an ovation.

Seeing that cutting you wonder how much the Italian understands the Chaplin quality. On various billboards there have been posters of some actor applauded in vaudeville who impersonates Charlie Chaplin, and the impersonation lacks every inner quality and almost every likeness save the obvious properties. At The Gold Rush this Roman audience does not laugh very much, and yet they seem not to feel the pathos of him. The cutting would seem to imply no perception of his method. Perhaps the

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quick Italian eye sees the whole of a stage idea faster and wants a speedier exhibition and winding up. But the very essence of this Chaplin art lies in its beautiful unbroken rhythm; you can see him establish a motive, it begins, it finds one or two actions that will reveal it, it comes to the end and waits a moment like a phrase in music echoing itself, it is finished. The Italian method on the other hand is in general more impromptu; it is apt to be redundant if not casual or worse, where Charlie Chaplin's is economical, pure and poignant.

The harlequinade of this art, they know, the lustre of its spirit and movement, you cannot doubt that. And they perceive, out of the long tradition that lies in the Italian past, the whole commedia that exists within this one mind. They know how many of the antique characters live in this one figure, and how much of the spirit of all the commedia dell' arte Charlie Chaplin embodies. In him its many persons and aspects are constantly implied, his brain and his poetry has for Italians a familiar dexterity and whim and invention. What they make of this figure of Charlie, their Charlot, of his defeat, his pure abstraction and poignancy I do not know, nor how much they translate all this into their own or universal terms. I do know that everywhere in Italy you see posters of Charlot and his pictures, and that the Genoese lady, as the lights come on, says to us, quite forgetting her compliments to the size and feats of Tom Mix, that Charlie Chaplin is unique in his art, the greatest artist of them all.

STARK YOUNG.

Gogol

IN a not even very exacting literary examination paper, the question, Who was Gogol? should rank high. It is sadly to be expected that very few Americans could answer the question at all, and still fewer name a book of his they had actually read. Yet there is something in the best of Gogol which, one would think, ought to have a singular appeal to the American spirit. One can so easily imagine him writing about us, and getting, by the simplest of means if also by the rarest kind of human and literary gifts, to the bottom of us, to that instinct for truth which makes each one of us think, in his heart of hearts and rightly, that he is not like any other human being in all the forty-eight states.

We have little excuse not to know Gogol, now that Mrs. Constance Garnett, the best of translators of Russian fiction, has turned her abilities in his direction. We had from her hand Dead Souls, his masterpiece, and a volume of short stories including that singular, that baffling treasure, The Overcoat, and now we have a third volume of his earliest stories, published about a hundred years ago (Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka. Knopf). Of all three, this volume is the least interesting, the least alluring to strangers, the least characteristic of Gogol as we think of him, and probably the greatest loser by translation. The stories which sprawl under that vague title scarcely hint what there was to come from him. They bubble, shout and sing with a wild, often sloppy exuberance, with a fantastic peasant fairy-tale carelessness and freshness which is not to be found in any of the other Russians translated into English. For Gogol came from Little Russia—temperamentally a long way from Great Russia, with her northern agonies, her frosts, orgies and disappointments, her heroisms and brutalities, her small people seen through great eyes, and by that themselves made great. Little Russia is the south, a Slavic Italy with full moons, rich harvests, sun, laughter and light-heartedness irrepressible. Also a land of superstition—none of your gaunt wolfish superstitions, but full-fed galloping raids of the imagination into the unknown.

In most respects it is a long way from Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka to The Overcoat, which is surely one of the most remarkable stories ever written. The farcical Little Russian with his tales of witches and midnight revelries is gone, and instead we have a story, not an author. The vast majority of stories are containers, more or less appropriate, more or less concealed, in which the writer packs his people. The people live and change according to their creator's skill, but unless his skill is of the highest, some corner of the box into which he has put them will always show. The Overcoat is a story without a box, without a container. It seems to have grown, like a fruit, in Gogol's mind, from whose branches it was suddenly found hanging down, enormous, mysterious, and all of one piece like an apple.

Some Americans have heard of Dead Souls, and a few have read it. It is a book which the too few of us who are interested in American fiction and the too many who are writing it ought to read. It is not only that we are missing a highly readable book; there are definite reasons why we ought to read it, and know it, too. It is a book curiously parallel with what is waiting to be done for America.

The story of it is well known, and of small importance. Two gifted crooks go about the country buying up serfs who have died, but are still on the rolls. The book stops short, Gogol never finished it, and he might have gone on writing it for ever. The story is only an excuse for presenting the main matter, a collection of some of the most curious, various and living specimens of humanity who were ever coaxed into print. The two partners go, naturally, from one estate to another in search of their nonexistent riches. The search for dead souls is the thread on which are strung appallingly voracious and complete descriptions of each estate, and the most humorous presentation of the owners. For anyone who finds fiction rewarding in proportion to the reality of the characters and the respect felt for their individualities by the author, Dead Souls is extraordinarily good reading.

Its greatness is not wholly due to its vitality, nor to its abundance, nor to its extreme vividness, if we may assume one of the vaguest of words to mean something, to denote that quality in writing which makes things and people "real," which makes them stand before our eyes and speak to our ears, which makes us remember them as we do people we have actually known, sometimes a little better. The eye that achieves "vividness" can be of several kinds. It can be reportorial, trusting that out of an accumulation of data a final impression will of itself arise; or it can, from the available facts, reject some and

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choose others, or it can carefully match facts that exist with others of its own invention. In these, the more literal visions by the eye and the mind's eye, we Americans have done well. We have done well also as caricaturists, cartoonists, exaggerators, and have succeeded in magnifying reality two or three diameters with astonishing results. But in between this understatement and this overstatement is an ability, which Gogol possessed to a high degree, to distort the person or the thing he is looking at ever so little, so little that one cannot see in what feature distortion has taken place. This is not a conscious gift; the writer cannot say to himself, "Here I will distort, here I will not"; it is a subtle partnership between the eye and the emotions, and whoever is not born with it is hardly likely ever to acquire it. Even the word "distorted" is too gross for the change Gogol works on what he sees.

Of course it is true that his material was quite unlike what we have to deal with. On the surface, and probably below the surface, too, it was much richer. As Gorky says, Russia is full of strange and remarkable people; "in Russia, even the fools are wonderful." Which is more than can be said of America. To the casual glance, and very few glances today are more than casual, we are repellently standardized. The novelist must go deeper, and that is always hard and painful work. The deeper he goes, the less standardized we will turn out to be, the more he will learn that no two of us are alike, and the nearer he will be to doing for America what Gogol did for Russia.

America is here, full of interesting people, and Gogol's method is there, for anyone to copy. What could be simpler: a plot which gives the writer the excuse for traveling from place to place and meeting all sorts of people, living in all sorts of different ways, one right after another? The nearest that we have come to Dead Souls is Huckleberry Finn. That was done for a Mississippi that is gone. Our own times cry aloud to be written about in the same way. Everything is present except the man, the eye that can penetrate everywhere and distort, ever so little, the calm sameness of the surface into dozens and hundreds of separate and fascinating human beings.

ROBERT LITTELL.

Anti-Literature

PAPINI'S new book of poems, Pane e Vino, contains one excellent piece which deserves to be known as a particularly eloquent expression of a state of mind characteristic of our time. I have made a rough English version —which does no justice to the qualities of the original:

Enough of words, so vulgar and so dull!
  Enough of literature, so florid and so faint!
We marketers of rouge to make earth beautiful—
  We only soil her ramparts with our paint.

Be silent and adore: those were the primal laws
  Of those rapt dwellers in the primal day—
Before the poets came with predatory claws
  To pillage earth and put her on display.

Like flowers pressed and classified and pent
  In some grand-duke's collection to crumble and to bleach,
The maiden riches of the world were spent
  Among the greasy pages of our speech.

The furnisher of desiccated graces,
  Between a cypress and a nightingale,
Intones a spell a little cracked in places
  For salvaging a muse a little stale.

With bath-tub hurricanes and faded sunsets trailing,
  With alabaster gods and stuffed leviathans,
We paste, with sighs and sweatings of oracles travailing,
  The face of life with plaster of romance.

Enough of words! The poet must abjure!
  The poet must return with all his purples furled!
So may we, when at last we bury literature,
  In silence taste again the savor of the world.

Papini's volume, however, turns out to be as badly plastered with literature as any—containing, as it does, in the most tiresome fashion of modern Alexandrianism, apostrophes to Dante and Leopardi which are also pastiches of their styles. Not, of course, that this is at all surprising: in literature, when one attacks a disease, it usually means that one suffers from it. And the encumbrance of life by culture, the clogging of the modern soul by the artistic excreta of the past, has long been a theme of Papini's.

That this problem should be acutely felt in Italy, where the heritage of the past hangs so heavy and where the present subsists largely as a parasite upon it, is easily understandable. It was Italy which produced the Futurist movement; and in 1913, Papini allied himself with it. At that time, he was in the habit of expressing himself in the following vein: "We have now had quite enough of our cities' being turned into made-over museums, market places for antiquaries, dumping-grounds for artistic reproductions and for snobbish fools. We have got to a point where even the art we produce ourselves, the art of the twentieth century after Christ, presents the same sort of aspect. Carducci and Pascoli were men of genuine poetic genius but, as professional humanists and professors, they were half strangled by their culture, and we have to seek far for their few fresh wild-flowers among the ruins of their archæological museums. It is from the immediate sensibility of the artist, expressed with violence and in freedom, that art should arise, and the artists of today live in 1913 and not in the third century before Christ or the sixteenth after. The great men of the past were great on their own account. Let us respect them and love them; but let us stop there! They must not blind and obfuscate us with their own particular visions. We must do for ourselves. It may be that we shall do worse; but we shall, in any case, produce something different. Nothing creative is accomplished without experiment. And we have had now quite enough of pastiches, of continuations and reproductions."

The Futurists found themselves in a dilemma between the live mechanical world, on one hand, and the dead ar-

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tistic one, on the other; and Marinetti, the leader of Futurism, decided for the former and let the latter go by the board. He was content to become a salesman and promoter and ceased, in any sense, to be an artist. But Papini, whose strong literary vocation made it impossible for him to repudiate literature, was unable to follow Marinetti and presently disengaged himself from the movement. One knows how he has since dealt with the dilemma, on his own account; from the confused and indigestible modern world, he has taken refuge in primitive Christianity. And this new book of poems is full of prayers to the Virgin, invocations of St. Francis of Assisi, and celebrations of a quiet country life and a contented domesticity.

Futurism was an Italian product: it was not until after the War that it really reached the rest of Europe. Rimbaud, in the seventies, had been caught in the same dilemma; and no subsequent writer has felt it more intensely or expressed it with so much genius. But Rimbaud adopted the drastic course of giving up literature altogether and—instead of organizing an anti-literature movement, like Marinetti or, after him, Tzara—escaping from Europe to Africa, where he drove caravans and traded ivory. At the end of the War, however, France and Germany had their Futurist movement in Dadaism—now surviving as "Surréalisme." I quote a characteristic utterance from the ablest of its spokesmen, Louis Aragon: "In the official schools . . . they teach reverence and devotion to everything basest and most inhuman that has ever been produced: Horace, Virgil, Montaigne, Corneille, Molière, Descartes, Spinoza, Tennyson, Schiller, Voltaire, Napoleon, Flaubert, Balzac, Auguste Comte and La Chèvre de M. Séguin! And look what dish-water drips from that salad: Anatole France, Paul Bourget, Marcel Proust and Charles Maurras! There are two exclamation-points: perhaps you would like a third. If I added the name of M. Cocteau, it would be no paradox. Good God, I'd rather be accused of a messianic delusion, than belong to that club!" He then goes on to announce a program of "Scandal for Scandal's sake"; but, like Papini, he rather disappoints us by following his furious preface (to a book called Le Libertinage: 1924) with a series of little sketches of some literary distinction but by no means astounding as scandal and, in their uneasy tossing about from one modern literary trick to another and between cynicism and romanticism, striking rather as evidence that Aragon feels his dilemma acutely than as proof that he has found an escape from it.

"In Russia or in America," wrote Papini, in 1913, "Futurism would be ridiculous." He had evidently never known any graduates of American universities. We have now, in certain quarters, a tendency toward an anti-culture reaction analogous to Futurism and Dadaism. But as we grow accustomed to these desperate outbursts, we find them somewhat less disturbing. No one with a sense of what is happening in the world would deny their significance or their sincerity. But we reflect that, of all the prophets of anti-literature, there has been perhaps only one man of first-rate literary ability, Arthur Rimbaud; and that he doubtless had other causes of maladjustment beside those chargeable to the situation of European culture. Aragon has taken to political anarchism; Papini has written a popular life of Christ in which, as Dean Gauss of Princeton has said, Christ is scarcely distinguishable from Mussolini. Marinetti and Tristan Tzara have, as I have noted, become promoters. But a few equally violent spirits have stuck to literature. And must it not be true that the fabrication of literature of durable quality has always been formidably difficult, requiring courage to go against public values and patience to work indifferent to public interest, and a vigorous enough constitution to digest culture without being poisoned by a surfeit? And have not its real triumphs all been won in grappling with—what raw human experience always is—hopelessly "unliterary" material?

EDMUND WILSON.

The Mystery Tale

A YEAR ago I promised faithfully to examine all mystery tales and detective stories sent to me, until I found what struck me as a good one: whereupon I was to write a page about my adventures or misadventures in this populous literary realm. The resolution gave me an excuse to indulge my appetite for thrillers. But I did not guess that I would have to taste such quantities of straw for a mouthful of good stuff. However, I've just gobbled the thoroughly satisfactory tale which prepares me to grow reminiscent about the scores of others that did not satisfy at all.

What was the matter with these others? Many were well constructed: many might have kept me guessing, had I been moved to guess. They failed to thrill me, because the material of which they were made was dull. Take such a book as The Red Lamp, by Mary Roberts Rinehart: for it is typical of most of them. It was carpentry from start to finish. The one living hand in the whole business was the hand of the author concocting mystifications. The characters were of such tedious shoddy stuff that nothing they "did," nothing they "felt," nothing they "saw" could possibly affect me. What if this house held ghosts in every closet, since the house itself and the persons who lived therein were more dead than ghosts?

This is the chief trouble with the average tale in which Chapter One has a murder and Chapter the Last an arrest. We are not interested in the murdered person. Why, then, should we care who did the deed? If the victim is but a stick, let the stick fall. Why pick it up? Why admire the flavorless detective who burns so many wires in an indifferent job? No intrigue can rise, in interest, above the value of its material. This is why ingenious plots—those, for example, of Miss Carolyn Wells which are vastly better than those of Mrs. Rinehart—usually fail. A plot must work on the reader through its actors. If these are wooden, the plot is wooden, too.

The tales of Sherlock Holmes, of Lecoq, of the great Nick Carter are comparatively successful, because of the luminous value of their central figure. A little life goes a long way in a detective story. We follow it faithfully and gladly. But without it, all the thrilling scenes in the world—as for instance in the stories of Frank Packard—are so much inert confusion.

The best of all the current unravelers of self-wound problems is the Englishman, J. S. Fletcher. I believe

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Woodrow Wilson's fondness for his gray-bound volumes first made Mr. Fletcher famous. I should like to think that there were enough weary brain-workers in the land to account for his large market. For Mr. Fletcher's stories are the best sedatives I know of. His plot is slow-following, mechanical, well oiled. Neither his crime nor its detection taxes the credibilities. He writes purposely in a low key, making but slight demand on thought and on emotion. And here, I believe, lies his conscious artistry. His books are not thrillers at all: they are soothers. As a rule, his tale begins with a genre picture of some rural place in England. His characters are quietly appealing types. His atmosphere is competent école Hardy. And now, ever so gently, he drops his crime into this peaceful puddle; and the reader is invited to jog along with the widening ripples until they reach the shore of detection. There is always enough life in place and persons to create our interest in the crime: just enough action is allotted to each chapter to swing us to the next. The dosage of melodrama and romance is carefully meted out in order to flesh the plot's bare mechanism. Our interest is never strained and never allowed to slumber.

I think Mr. Fletcher has written one masterpiece in this genre. It is called A Time-Worn Town: and if I had read it this past twelvemonth, I might have felt ere now that the game was won and this page ready. His other tales never quite rise to such distinction, although The Chestermarke Instinct is also admirable. They are pleasing and competent: they prepare one, always, to read their author again. But the virtue of all of Mr. Fletcher's stories is epitomized in this old one.

That virtue is simply stated: the author has endowed his milieu with potential mystery enough to compel the reader to accept the actual thrills at their written value. And with this statement, it seems to me that we are at the crux of what a good mystery story needs—and of what the Rineharts, Wellses, Oppenheims and their legion, lack. A thrill is a jewel of no consequence, unless it shines in the right setting. No murder, no disappearance of body or of diamond can be æsthetically real, unless the milieu of the plot corresponds to the action. Give us a milieu that suggests mystery, and the plot can be trifling. For even in plot stories the plot is not the thing. This is a simple problem of psychology. To call forth any suggestible emotion, the artist's work must go to configuring its *cause*. Whereupon the *effect* will follow.

This of course explains the success of Poe and Balzac, or of Wilkie Collins, when they wrote thrillers. The milieu is sedulously and livingly created. It exudes the suggestion of terror to the degree where terror almost automatically follows. Prepare an audience to be scared, and a mouse will make it scream. Fail to prepare it and it will look cool and doubting at a monster. Poe, for instance, prepares us for a monster; and often lets loose a mere mouse. No matter: our hair rises. The modern thrill-mechanic prepares for a mouse; and when we behold his intricate monster, we say, like the old lady who studied the giraffe in the zoo: "There ain't no such animal."

A Time-Worn Town gives us a darkly brooding provincial city. When the crime is committed here, we are ready emotionally to accept it. And a similar attention to suggestible milieu explains the success of the best book of its class I have read in all this year.

The Devil's Guard it is titled: and Mr. Talbot Mundy has not written a mystery tale in the conventional sense, at all. The story begins with no murder to be solved, no ghost to be grounded. A criminal is indeed unearthed; but the questers go after him, thinking him a victim; and in their search, they almost become his victims. The real quarry is a country: Tibet. The goal is the mysterious knowledge of the Mahatmas. And so well does the author establish the reality of the search, the human eagerness of the searchers, that he can leave out the solution altogether. We neither see the Masters of Sham-bha-la nor taste their ineffable wisdom. And yet the story of how four men hunted this unstoried game thrills us throughout, since the suggestion of the excitement of their search enlivens the pages.

Like Poe, like Conrad and his master Henry James, both of whom were artists of the mystery tale, Mr. Mundy posits his thrill so well that the reader works it out for himself. And this is the good track for all writers of mystery and detective fiction. The concocters of intricate problems which are solved by means of ghosts, chemicals, radios, airplanes and marvelous intellects, are unconscious victims of an age in which it is fondly believed that the machine can meet all human needs. Most current fiction of this class puts its hope on some mechanical contrivance—either to invent a perfect crime or perfectly to reveal it. But the main matter is to arouse emotions of terror, mystery, amaze: to incite the impulse of the hunt. And these emotions are all part of life. To put life in the reader, there is no subterfuge short of putting life in the story.

WALDO FRANK.

Land's End

Gray rock, gray sea, and whistling wind behind.
The condors cry. The sullen waters leap
Upon whirled wreckage. I shall surely find
A hollow in these jagged teeth and sleep.

In salty pools the crabs stir sluggishly
On six slow feet. Sideways they vaguely crawl
On all-fool's errand seeking memory
That lies beyond them where the breakers fall.

Time drives his tusks upon this wedge of land.
I shall sleep here without too much regard
For ancient antics. I shall understand
Nothing at all and find it not too hard.

The waters slide like oily snakes between
Rock runnels and the gulls hold stormy speech,
Their noisy rumors rising hoarse and keen
Above the twisted bones of this dead beach.

Here I will sleep enwombed with muttering thunder
And anguish of slow change nor know at all
The slack refusals of my stuttering wonder
Where solar systems sweep like gulls and call.

HERBERT S. GORMAN.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Alaska Points the Way

SIR: Side by side in today's New York Herald Tribune are two headlines.

Says the first:

FULL AMERICAN RULE IS
FAVORED FOR PHILIPPINES

The article goes on to explain that "the government by the Filipinos has been a signal failure. . . . Everywhere inefficiency is manifest. . . . Standards established by the Americans have broken down." Colonel Thompson has discovered that the law is sadly violated. "Conditions in the courts are said to be hopeless."

In the next column is this headline:

ALASKA JUDGES'
REMOVAL ASKED
IN RUM SCANDAL

A wave of corruption, it appears, is inundating them. A telegram has been sent to President Coolidge protesting at the "bootlegging, drug peddling, vice and corruption," and the failure of the Executive to replace the undesirable Judges appointed by Daugherty. "Conditions are growing steadily worse. . . . People have lost their respect for the Courts. Law enforcement has broken down."

How many years have we had Alaska? Enough is as good as a sermon!

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

Woods Hole, Mass.

Great Britain and a Federated Europe

SIR: Your editorial on Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's book, Pan-Europe, pointing out that England, if left out of the European Federation, must be "implacably hostile" but maintaining that "time and necessity" fight for the Count's scheme, challenges an endeavor to reach some less drastic estimate of the course of events.

I am not here concerned to ask whether Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's proposed substitution, for the old régime of European wars, of a plan which brings within our horizon the possibility of wars of Europe is or is not retrograde, but to inquire whether, if we are to contemplate such a system of continental United States, the British Empire, including England, indeed forms a natural bloc to itself.

In Britain it is possible to detect two schools of thought in foreign affairs, the one looking east and the other looking west. The future of the Empire would appear to depend upon which prevails.

The one is concerned with India, with the safety of the route to India and with the ensuing diplomatic complications with European powers in Mesopotamia, Syria and the Mediterranean. This school finds its natural home in the Conservative party, trained by tradition to regard Paris as the diplomatic centre of the world, inclined to view Italy as a useful friend, alarmed to find England made by the airplane strategically part of the mainland yet confirmed thereby in regarding Britain as essentially part of the European system and, hence, "implacably hostile" to extrusion.

The other school may, in time, become sufficiently progressive to regard Britain as the commercial entrepot of the Commonwealth in its relations with Europe and Westminster as a European diplomatic outpost. It may rid itself of an antique Europeo-centricism. Among members of the Labor party, for whom the sense of cousinship with the immigrant inhabitants of the Dominions may be expected to be more strong, because more often in accord with actual facts, this school may be expected to grow. The development of population will be on its side, since the situation cannot be expected to continue more than a generation whereby the small homeland supports greater numbers than the Dominions. If the centre of gravity of British politics were to remain in Westminster, Britain must suffer the fate of other small countries which have endeavored to support an empire beyond the capacity of the homeland to bear.

If, however, the centre of gravity is to be in the Empire, perhaps with commonwealth conferences now in Ottawa, now in Sidney, now in Cape Town, then the British Commonwealth must be recognized to be essentially a New World power, surrounding the United States like a half-moon. The powerful facts of geography make the United States an obvious part, and indeed centre, of this English-speaking bloc and new United States.

This conclusion may well be absurd, and undesirable even if possible, as conducing to those regional groupings which the League of Nations seeks to obviate and to that truculent imperialism whose essential vulgarity we must deplore. But it is not more absurd or undesirable than the plan for a United States of Europe formed from nationalities nourished in traditional hatred, for which plan, sir, you say that "time and necessity fight." It confronts fewer sentimental difficulties than the union of England and Scotland. And it opens up an interesting alternative to your pessimistic speculations on the future of the British Commonwealth and on the fate of England as a second Holland or Portugal.

GEORGE E. G. CATLIN.

Ithaca, N. Y.

The End of Laissez-Faire

SIR: May I endorse what Maynard Keynes has written so trenchantly on The End of Laissez-Faire? The ground has long been cut from under laissez-faire; and it must be concluded that it continues to exist only because business men are idealists, not the practical men they imagine themselves to be.

As to the shaping of the new order, Mr. Keynes is practically at one with a whole school of young economists in America who are experimental in their attitudes. They believe in intelligent control, not from dogmatic principles but toward favorable results. The means of accomplishing this is the recognition of the very tendencies Mr. Keynes recognizes in Britain. They are equally conspicuous here. To start from where we really are, as is proven by objective evidence, not belief or inherited dogma, and to proceed by experiment, by testing, cautiously but relentlessly, too, to create what we should like from the materials at hand is the best American doctrine. If Mr. Keynes had read us he would know it. But I, for one, am glad to find a British economist who is experimental. They have been pretty rare hitherto.

REXFORD GUY TUGWELL.

Wilson, N. Y.

The Changing Negro

SIR: May I take emphatic exception to one statement in the able editorial (in your August 4 issue) entitled The South "Goes Republican"? It occurs in the paragraph dealing with Mr. Kent's observations, and it may be his, rather than your, opinion that "The problem of the Negro remains virtually unchanged."

The Negro has experienced as a result of the War the most profound change of any group within the United States and one comparable only with those of some of the East European minorities. This change is due not so much to his migration to the North (although this has, of course, a real influence on those remaining behind) as to his migration from the farm into city and factory life. The 1920 census, which reflects only the first half of this mass movement, shows an increase of 21 percent in the urbanization of the Negro in the South. Whether "the problem of the Negro" is construed as his own problems or as those of the whites with him, this sudden change affecting so large a proportion of our 12,000,000 colored citizens is one that must be recognized and dealt

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with intelligently even at the cost of discarding some of our cherished prejudices about the Negro.

Near the top of the list is the prejudice that "college education spoils the Negro." Can that survive in competition with the growing realization that the health, prosperity and general welfare of our industrial centres depend in increasing measure upon the health, leadership and general welfare of their colored colonies where only the trained doctor, social worker, minister and teacher can be of effective service? Institutions developed to meet the problems of a rural economy cannot cope with those of city and industrial life; they must be supplemented with colleges and professional schools where young colored men and women can be prepared to render essential services.

Fisk University, known for more than half a century through its Jubilee Singers, is taking the leadership in stimulating public consideration of this post-war development in the needs of Negro education. While the white colleges and universities have been adding several hundred million dollars to their resources, Fisk has been striving to establish the first million-dollar endowment ever raised for a Negro college in the South. It still lacks some $75,000 of success. Then it and its sister institutions will require even more abundant support, for they head up the educational facilities for 10 percent of our population. Perhaps it is still a spiritual adventure for white America to think of Negro education in terms of adequate college and professional training for qualified students, but it is an adventure toward which we are being propelled by a practical situation. "The problem of the Negro" is indeed changed.

WILLIAM H. BALDWIN.

Nashville, Tenn.

The Passing of the South-Haters

SIR: In your editorial entitled The South "Goes Republican" in the New Republic of August 4, commenting upon the growing sympathy of the Southern conservative for the Northern Republican, you state that

> the Southern conservative is at last coming out in his true colors.

By imputing a charge of hypocrisy you miss the whole point of the matter. It was not reasonable that decent Southerners, of whatever political persuasion, should coöperate with Northern Republicans so long as the South was crushed by

> measures backed by the intellectual and moral forces of the other sections of the country. [I quote the World's Work for August, 1926.]

With the passing of the South-haters we may hope for happier times.

A. C. MARTIN.

Vancouver, B. C.

To Restore Liberty in California

SIR: As a result of a recent visit of Roger Baldwin to the Pacific Coast the Northern California Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union has been organized. An office has been opened at 473 Mills Building, San Francisco.

The chairman of the new committee is Professor Guido H. Marx of Stanford University, the vice-chairman Miss Alicia Mosgrove and the treasurer Mrs. Mary Hutchinson Fleisher, both of San Francisco. The membership of the committee includes John D. Barry, Rev. C. S. S. Dutton, Arthur Heeb, David Starr Jordan, William Kent, Robert F. Leavens, Fremont Older, Erskine Scott Wood, and others. In conjunction with an enlarged committee for the Southern California office a state campaign for the defense of civil liberties will be worked out under the chairmanship of George P. West.

The Committee has as Director of the work in Northern California, Elmo A. Robinson, until recently the minister of the Unitarian Church of Palo Alto. Among the objectives which the Committee has already outlined for its work are: the repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism law, the defeat of the proposed Constitutional Amendment requiring the Bible in the public schools, the defeat of a proposed law releasing pupils during school hours for religious instruction, opposition to the proposals of the Governor's Crime Commission, opposition to anti-evolution legislation, and the defense of the civil rights of alien minorities.

Friends of civil liberty in California are invited to make themselves known by writing to the Director at the above address. The organization has been made possible by the assistance of the New York office, but its permanence will depend upon the support which comes from the Pacific Coast area.

FORREST BAILEY.

New York, N. Y.

What's Wrong with the Home

SIR: I read with much interest Agnes de Lima's account, in a recent issue, of the Six Mothers. In every case things seemed to turn out badly!

But, is it to be wondered at under our present economic system? A system where the very basis of our monetary unit *compels* some to take more adult human work than they give in return? Should we expect the mothers (leaving out exceptions who succeed in spite of general conditions) to make any marked success of raising children when the fathers take such a small part in the raising? As long as economic customs ordain that fathers must spend their time getting the means to live, can children be really well raised?

All through the article it is noticeable that the fathers are not expected to take any more part, apparently, in the care and raising of the children than the most neglectful of the mothers do. I know this is the custom, but it is certainly not bringing very pleasing results.

Surely, we should seek to so change economic conditions as to make it impossible for one person to rob another through the monetary system (we can do it by making each monetary unit—dollar—represent nothing more nor less than one hour of adult human work). Then we would have the foundation (equal freedom among all sane adults of both sexes) necessary for the working out of a truly satisfactory mode of raising children. One in which both parents could take an active part. . . .

VAUGHN BACHMAN BROKAW.

Phoenix, Ariz.

Confessions of a Concert Singer

SIR: One gathers that America's Greatest Concert Soprano, whose confessions found space in the issue of July 28, is distressed at the amount of "psychology" involved in dealing with local managers, with club presidents and with the musical public in America. Perhaps this is not, as she may think, evidence of decadence; possibly in the days of her earliest predecessors Americans needed to be handled with similar deftness and address. I submit for what it may be worth the following item, printed in the New York Times for January 15, 1852:

> On Tuesday, Mlle. Jenny Lind, in company with some friends, visited Mr. Leutze's admirable picture of Washington Crossing the Delaware, exhibited at Stuyvesant Institute. She seemed delighted with the glorious representation of the Father of our Country, and said that every American might well be proud of such a masterpiece of Art.

It may be that as a critic of painting the gentle Jenny was merely an excellent singer, but given evidence of the character of this item there are few parlor psychoanalysts who would accept that hypothesis for a moment.

But, if I may speak seriously for those who have stood in need of *any* program that the managers of "Mme. A" and her fellow performers have permitted them to offer, may I not venture to hope that they will continue to find it possible to tell local managers and club presidents "how fine it is to be with them"?

L. E. CROSSMAN.

New York, N. Y.

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A Great Courtesan

Ninon de Lanclos, by Emile Magne. Translated and edited by Gertrude Scott Stevenson. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 311 pages. $4.

THE need of a survey of courtesanship has long been apparent, not a sociological treatise upon what is commonly known as the social evil, but a record of the sexual relations of men and women outside of marriage wherever these have been recognized as an element in social structure. The common view of such relations is that they are inevitably anti-social; yet in Greece the hetæra occupied a position of dignity and eminence above the wife's, and in Renaissance Italy the cicisbeo shared the responsibilities of the ménage, as an auxiliary husband. Undoubtedly the modern nation of which such an historian would take most account is France. As the history of the country across the channel is told chastely and beautifully by Miss Agnes Strickland in her Lives of the Queens of England, so that of its continental neighbor might be told in a History of the Mistresses of France—Agnes Sorel, Diane de Poictiers, Gabrielle d'Estrée, Mesdames de Maintenon, Pompadour and Du Barry. What a group of noble dames! M. Magne has passed by these brilliant figures for one still more arresting. Ninon de Lanclos never slept in the arms of royalty. Her loves had no political significance. Throughout her long career of courtesanship she remained strictly in private life. And yet she was a great personage of her time, an influence on the social life of her countrymen, and a contributor to the civilization of France at its highest point. It was not for nothing that the Duchess of Orleans, commonly referred to as Madame, expressed her satisfaction that her son, the future Regent, was accepted in Mademoiselle de Lanclos's circle. "She is very fond of him," she wrote, "and I wish he would visit her more often in preference to his other boon companions. She would inspire him with higher and more noble sentiments than they do." And Madame de Sévigné recognized Ninon's house as a centre of social cultivation and was delighted that her son-in-law, the Marquis de Grignan, should be received there.

Ninon de Lanclos was born in 1620. Henry IV was ten years dead from the dagger of Ravaillac, and Marie de Medici was ruling in the name of Louis XIII, and watching Rubens celebrate her late domestic felicity. Richelieu's star was rising. Madame de Rambouillet was beginning her social leadership at the age of thirty-two. Molière followed Ninon into the world by two years, Pascal by three, Mme. de Sévigné by six, and Mlle. Scudéry by seven. It is no affectation to recall them in connection with Ninon who was a collaborator with them in the culture of the great century. She was the daughter of a petty nobleman, Henri de Lanclos, and Marie Barbe de la Marche. The former was a keen libertine, intellectually and morally; the latter, profoundly devout. Ninon owed both her temperament and her training to her father. When as the consequence of a long and dangerous liaison he was exasperated by his opponents into killing one of them and obliged to flee abroad he left Ninon "a personality fashioned to his own pattern" with beauty as its sole support. Even while her mother lived she was surrounded by pretenders, not to her hand, for she had no dowry, but to her body. Then her mother died and Ninon was obliged to take serious thought to her future.

She had no desire to marry. She had already tasted the fruit of freedom. She accordingly fixed upon two middle-aged souteneurs, Jean Coulon, Member of the Parlement, and the Comte d'Aubijoux. Doubtless between the two Ninon got both more money and more freedom for her own projects. In her courtesanship the professional element was always reduced to a minimum, and the amateur spirit given free play. At this time she joined as a young neophyte the circle of Marion de Lorme who was at the head of the profession; and she seems to have become like her a popular heroine, if we may judge from one of the street songs which M. Magne's scrupulous scholarship has recovered for us:

> Chacun sait bien l'étroite union
> D'entre Monsieur et Madame Coulon.
> Si d'Emery
> Fait cocu le mari
> L'autre en conte à Ninon.

Strange as it may seem, the earlier portion of M. Magne's book, which relates the profane triumphs of Ninon, is far less interesting than the later, when the flesh had become merely an incident in a life of intellectual excitement. The long roll of Ninon's lovers leaves one rather cold: Gaspard de Coligny, whom she took from Marion de Lorme, the Chevalier de Méré, the Marquis de Jarzé, the Duc d'Enghien, the Comte de Navailles, Pierre de Villars, the Chevalier de Vendôme, the Marquis de Sévigné, whom she took from the famous letter writer, as well as two other admirers, Rambouillet and Vassé, and her son Charles. The great love of her life, that for Louis de Mornay, Marquis de Villarceaux, alone seems to have the elements of romantic fiction. When this affair had burnt itself out Ninon was ready to take love more casually. Moreover, the times were changing. Louis XIII had passed by, and a new regency, that of Anne of Austria, was inclined toward Puritanism. The Compagnie du Saint Sacrement was engaged in cleaning up Paris, and making its ways unsafe for carnal democracy. Ninon found herself not for the first time confined to a convent in the interest of her soul and of public morals. There Queen Christina of Sweden visited her, for whom Ninon, describing her enemies of the religious party, turned her most famous mot: "They are Love's Jansenists." During her seclusion Villarceaux fell desperately in love with the beautiful Madame Scarron, afterwards known as Madame de Maintenon, but whether successfully or not M. Magne is uncertain. At all events, the affair did not interrupt the friendship between the two women, and Ninon never again looked on Villarceaux as a lover.

Thenceforth Ninon kept a school of gallantry, a salon different in temperature and manners from the frigid gatherings of the Hotel de Rambouillet. She carried her libertinism over into the intellectual realms of social science and philosophy. She and her friends were sceptics in religion, Epicureans in life, advocates of freedom for women in regard to marriage, property and motherhood. She prized good conversation and she got it from Saint-Evremonde, Boileau, and most of all perhaps from Molière. In his warfare against hypocrisy in religion and culture Ninon was his staunch ally. She had already a literary war on her hands when he came to her rescue with Les Précieuses Ridicules. Ninon is credited with having given him the hero of Tartuffe in a certain Abbé de Pons, and the last riotous act of Le Malade Imaginaire was composed at her house. She was now well-to-do and powerful, an important member of Parisian society. Saint-Simon notes that it was the fashion to be received at her house for the sake of people to be met there, and he adds: "There was no gaming, ribaldry, nor brawling, and no one discussed

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politics or religion." She formed a centre of conservatism and good taste opposed to the wilder ways of youth who flamed about the Duchesse de Bouillon. Thus she passed down the decades to a dignified and honored old age, in which she enjoyed and shared the happy fruits of a life of sin. The secret of her eternal charm was revealed by Méré, who had been her lover both according to the flesh and the spirit: "Women who have been gallant," he wrote, "never become narrow-minded." Even the consolations of religion were not denied her, and about her death bed priests struggled for the distinction of her conversion—her last favor. Ninon was too good-hearted to withhold it, though her sense of humor flared up in a final mot. "You know what a fortune I could have formerly made by selling my body. I could do even better now by selling my soul."

It is hardly necessary to observe that M. Magne has written a thoroughly scholarly book. Most biographers dealing with a woman of loose morals tend to write loosely, and take as many liberties with their subject as if they were her lovers. Not so M. Magne. He shows the same scrupulous sense of honor as if he were dealing with Queen Victoria. He threads his way among the débris of gossip cast about by his predecessors with infinite patience and tact. He deals with false surmise and false witness in so triumphant a fashion that we quote his findings with confidence, even though the translator has obliterated most of the notes by which M. Magne makes evident the steps of his inquiry. In this we think she is mistaken. In such investigation as this, the authority adds interest and color to the fact. However, Miss Stevenson has given us an excellent translation of a book which is a worthy sequel to her revealing study of the great century in her selection from the Letters of Madame.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Americans in Mexico

The United States and Mexico, by J. Fred Rippy. New York: Alfred Knopf. 401 pages. $5.

The Rosalie Evans Letters from Mexico. Arranged with Comment by Daisy Caden Pettus. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. 472 pages. $5.

SIR, the Spirit of Continental Independence, the Genius of American Liberty, which in earlier times tried her infant voice in the halls and on the hills of New England, utters it now, with power that seems to wake the dead, on the plains of Mexico and along the sides of the Andes." With this gorgeous flourish the great Daniel Webster greeted the new independent republics of Latin America more than a hundred years ago. Since that time, judging from the frosty chill on the latest diplomatic notes dispatched from Washington to Mexico City, something significant has happened. If our grand experiment in freedom once inspired the followers of Benito Juarez to noble emulation, it seems that the oblations now poured out by President Coolidge on the altar of Liberty leave President Calles cold and dubious. If all citizens of the United States once cheered Mexican efforts to establish stable and efficient self-government, a large part of them, it appears, are at present more interested in what any such administration, when, as, and if, might do to their acquired and vested rights beyond the Rio Grande.

Anyone who would like to know how this transformation in "public opinion" came about will do well to read two books on Mexico recently from the press—one of them by an historical scholar of high standing, Prof. J. Fred Rippy, and the other from the pen of Mrs. Rosalie Evans, whose tempestuous life and tragic death filled diplomatic archives with huge dossiers. The work of the former, with a flair for fine detail, gives a picture of American relations with Mexico drawn largely from the official sources of diplomatic exchange. In the letters of the latter, collected and arranged by the hands of an affectionate sister, may be read a story of recent Mexican agrarianism in relation to foreign landholders—a story which shows the human and economic stuff out of which international relations and wars are made. Thus by one the past is revealed from papers and records closed to the mass of American citizens who cheered, voted, expressed opinions, attended conferences, and considered themselves wise in their day. By the other the curtain is raised on one corner of the living present, divulging the experience of an American woman who married an Englishman in Mexico, took over the management of an estate after his death, and with passionate determination fought governments, rioters, revolutionaries and diplomats until at last she was cut down in cold blood.

In Professor Rippy's pages may be traced in minute lines the course of the relations between the United States and Mexico from 1848 to the arrival of Porfirio Diaz on the scene as dictator. For that period the historical literature now available permits the creation of a full and well balanced structure of fact and conclusion. There is no doubt about the nature of the transactions which embroiled the two countries in endless controversies or the nature of the "diplomats" to whom negotiations were entrusted. Professor Rippy glosses nothing, spares nothing. The stark reality of the business juts out of his chapters like granite rocks from New England hills. When, however, he comes to the contemporary period he is of necessity more limited in the range of his materials, and he feels warranted in giving only about fifty pages to peaceful penetration under Diaz, the challenge of the revolution to the United States, President Wilson's Mexican policy, and the latest phases. If on reading this historical survey some critics might feel inclined to bring other facts into the picture, even the most captious will hardly deny the authenticity of the evidence chosen for presentation.

Having studied the past, Professor Rippy does not shrink from the obligation of considering the present. American relations with Mexico are still in an acute stage, offering problems that are apparently baffling to both parties. Our author seems inclined to think that the correct policy for guidance is to be found in the idealism of President Wilson; and yet his own survey of the facts, as distinguished from the verbalism of the occasion, does not show that Wilson's conduct with reference to Mexico was essentially different from the conduct of Taft, Harding, or Coolidge. Wilson certainly did not pursue a course of non-intervention; Tampico bears witness. Neither did he turn to Mexico the iron front of capitalism; Grey and Lichnowsky in London could not believe their ears. And whatever his policy was, it apparently did not make many friends for the United States across the southern border.

Looking beyond the present, Professor Rippy suggests that "merchants, masters of finance and captains of industry may one day find it possible to agree upon a Mexican policy." When that comes to pass they will either induce the Mexican government to yield to their demands or call upon the American government to back them up.

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What then will be done in the United States by "the laborers and the humanitarians, the churchmen and the plain people?" If Mexico is coerced by war, what lies beyond? With these pertinent questions our author concludes. Another inquiry might, however, be added without profanation. If American merchants, masters of finance and captains of industry manage to wring all they want from the Mexican government by mere economic pressure and the rest of us—pure in heart—get all the oil, copper and hemp we need, should American laborers, humanitarians, churchmen and plain people imagine they see any stains on their hemp, copper and coupons or in their gasoline? Evidently the business is not simple.

Admirably supplementing Professor Rippy's survey of diplomacy, Mrs. Evans's letters describe some passionately human acts in the grand drama. She was a victim of the revolution, and those who see cataclysms with their own eyes are likely to take a different attitude from that of historians who survey them from a distance. She and her husband were living on their estate at San Pedro Coxtocan when the storm broke over the head of Diaz. They fled to Mexico City and later from the country. In 1917, Mr. Evans returned to look after his property and died shortly afterward. Thereupon his wife went back to take up the work that fell from his hands. "From the first," we are told, "she held the task of regaining her husband's property as a sacred cause," and in that spirit she gathered her Indians around her, supervised the tilling of her fields, defied agrarians, politicians and diplomats, and held fast to her land until she was shot in August, 1924. In these letters her doings, negotiations and vehement emotions were recorded from day to day. The hard-headed man of affairs will doubtless be inclined to think that she should have taken the bonds which the Mexican government offered her in exchange for her property and sought a retreat in Los Angeles or some other safe place. That was in effect what the Hon. Charles Beecher Warren, the American commissioner-ambassador, told her to do. But Mrs. Evans was made of different stuff. She intended to keep her heritage and she died fighting for it.

Apart from their significance as amazing human documents, Mrs. Evans's letters light up with lurid flashes obscure places in Mexican history and diplomatic relations. They reveal some of the realities with which the Mexican government and the government of the United States had to deal. They throw light on the manufacture of "cases" and "public opinion," on the inner nature of intrigue and negotiation in Mexico City. In these pages it appears that American landowners in Mexico could get a great deal by shooting straight, but were in the end sacrificed to the game of American investment capitalists. Indeed Mrs. Evans was convinced that the American commissioners, Mr. Payne and Mr. Warren, whom she described as "fat, stand-offish, large, impressive, looking like stage bankers," were attending to particular things rather than a general welfare which included her own case. She flatly declared that Mr. Warren's treaty was made for the purpose of inducing Calles to support capital and was ruinous to the holders of small estates. Angry at his policies and conduct, she represented him as pompous, conceited, hard and tearfully sentimental. She asserted that he promised her protection and then failed her in the end; she was a landowner and he had other irons in the fire. In such a tangle of things, a mere reviewer will do well to assume the rôle of reporter. Still there is internal evidence in these letters to the effect that Mrs. Evans presented knotty problems for Mr. Warren to solve and thrust upon him perplexities that must have tried his soul. One need not be lacking in respect for her intrepidity if one feels that the latter is entitled to a large measure of public sympathy.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

A Positivistic History

Comparative Philosophy, by Paul Masson-Oursel. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 212 pages. $3.50.

POSITIVISM is a hard-headed doctrine which breathes contempt for metaphysical speculation, vague generalizations, unverifiable assumptions and individual interpretations. It cries out for cold, objective, tangible data, refusing to transcend the available concrete evidence. This is the view which Masson-Oursel brings to a study of the philosophic contributions of the past. By clinging closely to the facts of history and by viewing the work of different thinkers in terms of their environments, he endeavors to place the history of philosophy on an objective footing. By comparison and analogy he relates men to epochs, and then formulates a mathematical proportion, giving in definite terms all the vital information which such a study yields and which a positivistic history can use. To say that "Socrates is to Greek Sophism what Confucius is to Chinese Sophism" is definitely to objectify the work of these two men and concretely to express their influence and significance.

Although this approach enables Masson-Oursel to make some very interesting observations regarding the speculations of the Orient and permits him to contrast the thought of the East with that of the West, it is possible only because he has gone beyond the bare historical fact. The history of thought cannot be accurately portrayed as a linear progression of a localized phenomenon, except perhaps in its infancy. The speculations of any philosopher, though tempered possibly by the spirit of his era, are the fruit of personal study and reflection. He nourishes himself in accordance with his temperament and thought at an open storehouse where the harvests of previous ages have been gathered. To treat him exclusively in the light of his period is to overlook important influences which have dominated his thought. In addition, no thinker can be related to another or to his environment in any significant manner without resorting to interpretation and personal judgment. The only positivistic history is an almanac; the only positivistic history of philosophy is a collection of excerpts.

In the second and more interesting part of the book, after a chronological list and study of the philosophers of Europe and Asia, Masson-Oursel briefly surveys the logic, metaphysics and psychology of the West, the Middle East, India, China and Japan. Unfortunately he has been content merely to indicate the interesting similarities and differences which such a study reveals. The passing reference made to the Chinese Sophists' application of the logic of identity, the atoms of the Jains, the predicables of Vaicesika realism, the Taoistic view of the equivalence of incompatibles and the Chinese subjugation of thought to social concepts, is sufficient only to whet the appetite and send one scurrying to the library in search of the references listed in the bibliographies, detailed at the end of each chapter. As an introduction to the philosophy of the Orient, it admirably serves its purpose; as an example of the comparative method and positivistic viewpoint, it demonstrates too well that the refusal to treat a philosopher qua philosopher means superficiality and poverty.

PAUL WEISS.

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California Gold

Sutter's Gold, by Blaise Cendrars. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

IN Sutter's Gold Blaise Cendrars has once more turned to America, a literary field that has kindled his imagination many times before, and to what was perhaps the most thrilling, as certainly it was the most convulsive, period the New World has known—the discovery of gold in California in 1848. Blaise Cendrars, like Valéry Larbaud, Paul Morand and Jean Giraudoux, possesses a cosmopolitan outlook and has done not a little to fructify French culture by introducing France to some of her more and less remote neighbors. It is the more remote peoples that chiefly interest M. Cendrars. He is a world traveler and adventurer and is rarely observed in the haunts of Parisian writers, save when he reappears, like a literary colporteur, from some far-away country with the material for a new anthology of folk lore, or a volume of sketches or poems. His nostalgia for the primitive became evident with the appearance of his admirable Anthologie Nègre, of which a second volume is now in preparation. His love for the flora, fauna and human species of the tropics has given color, ardor and an exotic warmth to virtually everything that he has written.

Impudent poet and incorrigible romantic that he is, Blaise Cendrars is not without respect for historical records and documents when he chooses a theme with an historical basis. Sutter's Gold is a sufficiently accurate account of the life and adventures of John Augustus Sutter, the Swiss emigrant who sought his fortune in America, and who, after stirring adventures in various parts of the United States and the South Seas, became the founder of Sutter Fort and the owner of the agricultural colony of New Helvetia in the Sacramento Valley. The discovery of gold on his property brought the world to Sutter's gates; eager gold-seekers invaded his fields, trampled his vineyards, laid waste his crops, and left fire and destruction behind them. Ruined, the doughty pioneer sought restitution, and the famous Sutter suit against the United States government and the state of California was inaugurated. After years of heartbreaking litigation, a favorable verdict, indemnifying Sutter for his losses, was reached only to be quickly overthrown by political forces in Washington. Penniless, and now actuated by a religious passion for obtaining justice, the pitiful old man wandered from one bureau to another in a final effort to overcome official inertia and regain his rights; then came death in the protective fold of a religious brotherhood in Pennsylvania.

Such in brief are the facts upon which Blaise Cendrars has built his story. What matter if he has changed names and places, if he has added a fictive touch of color or of drama here and there? It is true that his description of life at Sutter Fort in the era of peace and plenty before the discovery of gold reads like life on the estate of some governor of a particularly rich Roman province. He fills it with a suavity and grace that is more south-European than Californian. Nevertheless, he manages to express the spirit and life of the country during that period of unparalleled expansion and exploitation with almost uniform fidelity. The tale is an epic of American life; and reviewing the career of Sutter, even in this romantic form, one comes to understand and even to go far toward forgiving the whole from-outcast-to-millionaire genre of fiction, for, after all, it has been rooted in reality.

FAITH MARIS.

A Flute among Brasses

Grenstone Poems: A Sequence, by Witter Bynner. With an Introductory Note by Edgar Lee Masters. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 307 pages. $2.50.

IN the three hundred pages of Grenstone Poems there are a few moments of poetry in the essential voice of Witter Bynner. When the reader comes upon these moments, they are recognizable by the delicate life trembling in them. It is a misfortune for Mr. Bynner's reputation as a poet, which is slender but genuine, that these fresh notes of selfness are drowned out by many pages of more pretentious and empty verse. Pretentious because Mr. Bynner is consciously filling the rôle of poet as he conceives it, and empty because the voices in them are borrowed.

The "essential voice" of Mr. Bynner is a tenderly reluctant acceptance of the unattainability of all human relationships. Friendship, love, the awareness of the unseizable life within us, all hold in their highest moments the baffling evasion of dissolution. This central fact in life has been met in many ways. Mr. Bynner meets it with a regret which is slightly ironical. It neither drives him to tragic bitterness, as it drove Shakespeare, nor to tragic joy, as Whitman knew it. Out of his distinctive attitude he has given us, from time to time, poems of appealing and sensitive beauty. But in an age when poets are expected to be "significant," or democratic, or socially conscious or God knows what, Mr. Bynner has not been able to keep the necessary respect for himself. He has been influenced into thinking that a poet should have more to say than that. He has sincerely admired other poets, more dominating than himself, and has imitated them, who imitated no one. Consequently his poems are often masks through which come echoes of Whitman, echoes of Housman, echoes of Herrick . . . and only occasionally the voice of Witter Bynner, whom he neglects but cannot escape.

Those who read the charming poem of farewell to a friend in China, published a few years ago when Mr. Bynner came back from the Orient, will recognize his elusive music in this stanza from Breath:

> I look at you with a stranger, older intimacy,
> I forget who you are whom I love,
> With your temporal face,
> I forget this or any of the generations
> And its temporal face
> And the lovely curious fallacy of choice . . .

These lines have the charm of Bynner, and the flexible control of his own technique. There are more such passages in Grenstone Poems. But whenever he deserts himself, his music deserts him also. This is only too apparent in the love poems à la Herrick, his addresses to multitudes with the external gestures of Whitman, or his announcements that "he becomes a god who has felt the presence" of his Celia.

Mr. Masters, in the introduction, praises Mr. Bynner for the unnative qualities which are the result of time and place: the "democratic feeling," the "stern rebukes of injustice," the "indignation for despotisms"—and barely hints at the original poet, not a forceful poet it is true, but with a strangeness of his own, whom Mr. Bynner has been too ambitious to listen to faithfully.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS.

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Notes

A Mirror to France, by Ford Madox Ford. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. 290 pages. $2.50.

GET, one always wants to say to Mr. Ford, get from between me and the sun. The sun in this instance is France, which Mr. Ford deeply and genuinely loves, just as he no doubt genuinely loved Joseph Conrad. In Conrad's case, Mr. Ford achieved a nearly total eclipse; here, either he has restrained himself or else the vast luminary curves its rays around him. At any rate one is often pleasantly warmed, for Mr. Ford's prejudices and preferences are very much what one imagines one's own, and any decent civilized Anglo-Saxon's, to be. There is much understanding in these pages, and some information, and a great number of things one envies him to have seen and found out alone. There is sense, too, and friendly pictures, and the smells and echoing of many a beloved street. Then there are characteristic lapses into humilities and self-denigrations which are never free from an almost infuriating self-complacency. And what an indefatigable river of talk, carrying some cargoes, slow ponderous cargoes spaced at long intervals, but a river just as contented to flow on for hours by itself, carrying practically nothing at all. R. L.

The Three Conventions: Metaphysical Dialogues, by Denis Saurat. New York: The Dial Press. 128 pages. $2.

SPINOZA'S tractates are as fully fleshed as a novel, compared to these metaphysical dialogues by the author of Milton: Man and Thinker. Professor Saurat has set himself to describe the abstract structure of the universe, in a dialect of philosophy which leaves one faintly grasping concepts like the Actual and the Inactual, the Material, or Universal Convention, the Moral, or Human Convention, and the Convention of Ideas, or the Metaphysical Convention. The participants in these dialogues are themselves abstractions of a single mind, labeled for convenience the poet, the psychologist, the metaphysician. Before one can grasp a book of this character, one must master the language; before one can master the language, one must understand the book. I cannot tell whether these ideas are deep or superficial, for unfortunately, although I have read The Three Conventions, I have not yet broken through this vicious circle. L. M.

New England Captives Carried to Canada, by Emma Lewis Coleman. Portland, Maine: The Southworth Press. Two vols. 890 pages. $10.

THE student of that period of New England history which contains the so-called French and Indian Wars cannot fail to find this book a veritable treasure trove. In its minute and painstaking garnering of details an incalculable amount of work is involved. These volumes are practically the last word of research in this field, a last word of positive authority and definiteness. The plan is simple—an introductory chapter on the wars in general, a second chapter dealing with the Missions and Missionaries, which contains material that is of rare interest and throws extraordinary light upon the French side of the struggle, two further chapters that treat of the Indians and the endless passing back and forth of emissaries of ransom and redemption, and incidentally the tireless efforts of the French priests to absorb and retain the captive strangers. Then follow, in historical sequence, the many raids which covered roughly a period of one hundred years. The names of all families concerned and of all individuals killed or captured are traced with the minutest care—thumbnail sketches as it were, that are of necessity jerky and disconnected, but picturesque to a remarkable degree. Miss Coleman deliberately renounces the rôle of story teller, puts forward her material in its most documentary form and makes no attempt to weave her thousand and one separate threads into a definite fabric. Yet to an astonishing extent they fall into a dramatic pattern, a brilliant and clear-cut picture of that century of bloody depredation. E. B. H.

Les Bourreaux, by Henri Barbusse. Paris: Flammarion.

LES BOURREAUX (as yet untranslated) is an account of the findings in the Balkan regions of Henri Barbusse and two associates, and amounts to a vigorous attack upon the reactionary governments which made possible the White Terror. To those who ask concerning the reports coming from those restless regions of Europe: "Are they true?" Barbusse replies, and backs his reply by a host of official documents, "The truth is worse." The public conscience, he says, "can no longer remain indifferent before the bitter convulsion of barbarism which is today unchained in the whole of one part of the old continent."

The name of Henri Barbusse and the careful documentation of the book make it impossible to ignore the volume as no more than smoke without fire. The record of crimes committed against the people reads strangely like a revival of Inquisition days. Profiting by military occupation and assimilation of new provinces, as in Rumania, Greece, or Jugoslavia, or aided by troubles directly or indirectly provoked by government agents as in Bulgaria, these powers have used, says M. Barbusse, the most extreme methods in the extermination of their political enemies, the people. "We must cry Assassin!" writes the author. The chief tool of the governments has been—it is an old story—the army, and its officers have been given the absolute powers of despotism.

M. Barbusse addresses his concluding chapter to a crucified and essentially noble people, a fine tribute which gives point to his appeal to lovers of humanity for aid for the victims of the White Terror. W. O. C.

Contributors

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